

A D I V I N E  
C O R D I A L L  
F O R A  
Devout Soule.

Composed out of a serious Discourse  
upon the Sinne against the

H O L Y G H O S T :

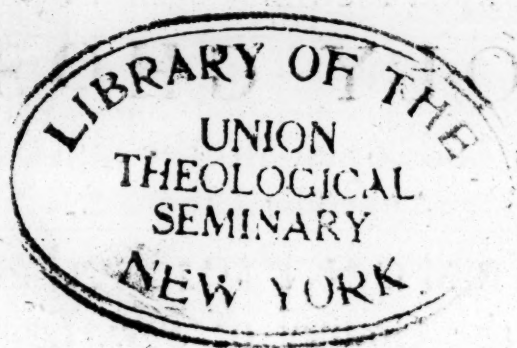
As it was laid open in the full Nature and  
Appendices thereof.

In a S E R M O N Preached at *Taun-*  
*ton* in the County of *Somerset*, upon  
*Monday, April 4. 1653.* In the  
Affize Week.

By WILLIAM SCLATER, *Doctor in Divinity*,  
Now Preacher of the Word of God in *Broadstreet*,  
L O N D O N.

Matth. 12. 31, 32. *Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, nor in the World to come.*

L O N D O N: Printed by *M. Simmons*, and are to  
be sold by *William Hope* at the *Blew Anchor*  
behind the *Exchange*. 1653.



JUN 17 1948



TO THE  
RIGHT WORSHIPFULL  
George Luttrell of Dunster-Castle,  
Esq; High Sheriffe of the County  
of Somerset: All true felicity.

SIR;

**H**is Sermon (solid, I hope, though not polite, or trim enough, perhaps, for this age) as it was by an unexpected providence, in a solempne, and Honourable Assembly, preached at your instance; now also, upon your motion, together with the entreaties of the primeſt Auditors, drawne forth into a more generall view: It cannot but claime a double interest in you, both as an eminent Hearer (such as your station rendred you) and as a Patron, such as its owne tenuity cannot but want: It comes to you, not that you (chiefly under so great a surfet of the Presse) need it, but that it needs you: The honour of whose worthy family and Progenitors, it hath still been to be Mecænates Scholarium, and your Castle (like the old Parnassus) as it were an Academy for learning, and learned men: It's written of Abel (righteous by Gods owne testimony of him) that being dead, he yet speaketh, ἐτι λαλῆται, or, is yet spoken of; his exemplary piety carrying with it a kinde of Vocall Oratory to perswade even the ages to come unto imitation, that whilst the lustre of his graces sparkle in the lives of successors, his memory cannot but be perpetuated: And long may what soever was eximious in our Ancestors, find still a continuation in your selfe.

But indeed, that being properly a mans \* owne in vertue, which is personall; your owne merit being (as I question not) copious, may claime a Panegyricke, as ample; to the sound of things commendable your name and actions (like Unisons in Musick) answere, and (out of no long acquaintance) I ob-

Heb. 11. 4.

\* Sed genus,  
& proavos, &  
quæ non feci-  
mus ipsi vix ea  
[nostra] voco--  
Ovid.

# THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

serve your modesty to adorne your endowments; it resembles shadowing in the Art of Limning, which turnes extreamly to the advantage of the Limner, by setting off the excellency of his Penfill: Yet however you delight not to be praised to your self, notwithstanding your pious ingenuity will constantly have eye unto things praise-worthy. It was a goodly sight to behold Gods Tabernacle, and Davids Palace situate together on the same Sion; so is it to see Goodnesse and Greatnesse like those living Creatures, and those wheels (in \* Ezekiel) to move, and to be lift up together: When all is done, godliness is the greatest || gaine, and religious practice the highest \* honour: Whilest this is your aime, your Name shall become as some precious Ointment poured out, your selfe, your vertuous Consort, and all your relations, shall be blessed out of heaven with the exuberancies of Gods both hands, you shall augment the reputation of your house, and the already purchased estimation of your Countrey: If my weake endeavours in this present Sermon may prove any furtherance this way, I have my desire, as, who am,

\* Ezek. 1. 19.

|| 1 Tim. 6. 6.

\* 1 Sam. 2. 30.

S I R,

Yours, To be Commanded

in the Lord.

London: 18: 1657: WILLIAM SCLATER.



# WHAT THE SINNE

Against the Holy Ghost, is.

I JOHN 5. 16, 17.

*There is a Sin unto death: I doe not say that he shall pray for it.*

*All Unrighteousnesse is Sin, and there is a Sinne not unto death.*



**I**T was not in my purpose, nor came it at all within the Compasse of my Thoughts (Right Honourable, and Beloved) when I came late, the other evening, unto this \**Towne* (so well spoken of for Religion, and discreet zeale for Gods Ordinances) to become a Speaker here, this morning, on so solemn an occasion: Yet sith the divine providence hath so disposed, I willingly submit thereto, choosing rather to expose my weaknesse to the pious candor of this so intelligent Auditory, than to decline so faire an occasion, to bring some glory to God, in the <sup>(a)</sup> use of my Talent, after my <sup>(b)</sup> measure.

And so, without farther Apology, I addresse my selfe to my Text; for the clearer explanation whereof, it may not be amisse to reflect a little upon the precedent Context, and the Circumstances thereof.

The Apostle from the fourteenth verse to the last, in this

\* *Tanton.*

<sup>(a)</sup> Mat. 25.  
16.

<sup>(b)</sup> Rom. 12.3.  
2 Cor. 10.13.

*Context.*



this Chapter, sheweth us ( as the Diamonds set in the Rings of these three Epistles ) sundry eminent and eximious Priviledges belonging to the regenerate sons and daughters of God : such are,

1. Assurance of audience in Prayers, provided they order their devotions according to his will, *ver. 14.*

2. Immunity from Apostacy.

3. Knowledge of Regeneration.

4. Certaine and infallible perswasion of the truth of mysteries of Faith, Knowledge of the True God, and Union with him in Christ, *v. 20.*

And verse the sixteenth he amplifies that Blessing of being heard in prayers by extent of it ; that priviledg appertaining to them. Not only as it may serve for supply of their owne personall wants, but also as it may benefit and advantage others ; we say indeed in our Creed, *I believe in God*, to denote, that it must be our owne particular faith that must save us ; but in our Lords Prayer, *Our father, which art in Heaven*, to imply that our Prayers may further the good of others besides our selves ; wherefore S. John withall insinuates an Exhortation, that as they had received this favour of God to be heard in their requests both for themselves and others, so they would improve, and use the same, not alone for themselves, but likewise to the help and behoofe of others. Wherein are these observables.

1. The duty exhorted unto, *Prayer.*

2. The Object of this Duty, with a limitation, *A Brother not sinning unto death.*

3. Reason, from the profitable effect, *He shall give him life.*

In the latter end of the sixteenth verse he subjoynes the reason of that limitation ; as if he had said, marvell not, that I interpose that restraint, *A Brother sinning not unto death* ; for there is a sin unto death, for which no man may pray : And then is added a prolepsis, *ver. 17. Is nat all unrighteousnesse sin ? all sin deadly ?* to which he an-



answers, 1. By Concession, yes, *All unrighteousnesse is sin.* 2. By an *ἐπαγχορισμός*, or correction, but *there is a sin not unto death.*

This the Context, and order of the words. My present discourse, wherewith I shall now entertaine your patience, shall be confined to the Reason of the Apostles Limitation, forementioned, namely, the sin which is here said by the Apostle to be unto death. A difficult question, and so difficult, *Ut fortè nulla major*, as S. (c) *Austin* protesteth, *That scarcely is there any one found more in all holy writ*; this being a sin which is rarely, if at all to be dehrehended, or discovered by man in this life.

I shall proceed herein after this order.

1. Endeavour to open the nature of it, what it is, or wherein it consisteth.

2. To unfold the reason of the stile, or titles that are given it in the Scriptures.

3. The dangerous issue, and effect of the same.

I begin with the consideration of the Nature of it; and shall proceed therein, as Rhetoricians speake, *κατ' ἀγρίον, καὶ θίον*, first, removing the erroneous opinions both ancient, and modern hereabout; and then, set downe the positive Truth.

Saint (d) *Ambrose* acquaints us of the *Novatian* Heretiques of old, who by sins unto Death, that is, such sins as are mortall in the event, understood all sins that are committed against Knowledge and Conscience, voluntarily after Baptisme; and to men so sinning they intercluded the hope, and denied the benefit of \* pardon: But all this not more uncomfortably, than unsoundly: for, besides what we find in S. (c) *Cyprian*, and other ancient Fathers of the Church, touching the restoring of relapsed Christians, who having fallen through fear, under the rage and violence of the Primitive Persecutions, were, notwithstanding, upon their *Exomologesis*, and testimony given of their Repentance, and desire of restitution, admitted againe into the communion

(c) S. *August.*  
Ser. 11. de  
verb. Dom.

(d) S. *Ambros.*  
l. 1. c. 9. De  
Pœnit.

\* Μετὰ τὸ  
ἀποδοῦναι μὴ ἐπὶ  
δυνάμει ἐλθε-  
ῖν αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὸ  
κοινῶν, *Epi-*  
*phan.* l. 2. c. 59.  
(c) *Cyprian.*  
De lapsis.

munion of the Church: We know that *Moses* prayed for the *Jewes* sinning voluntarily, *Exod.* 32. 11. so also *Samuel*, *1 Sam.* 12. 23. and *S. Stephen*, *Acts* 7. 59, 60. and their prayers were heard: We read likewise of some in *Pergamus*, even in this Apostle *S. John's* owne time, who (after Calling) held the hatefull Doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*, who yet were again invited unto Repentance, *Rev.* 2. 16. and by that means came within the number of such as might be prayed for.

Among the Moderns, are the Romish Imposters, for the *Rhemists* on this place, give this sense; *If any sin unto death*, that is, commit any mortall sin, and impenitently persists therein, unto death, for such an one pray not, namely, say they, after death; and out of this place would they, by (f) torturing the Text, infer their doctrine of prayer for the dead: and their reason is, because no one may be dehorted from praying for any sinner, while he is living, in as much as there is hope of pardon, and repentance for every sinner living: But first, the very ground is false, for the Scripture saith expressly, *There is a sin committed even in this life, that is not capable of pardon, neither in this life, no nor in the life to come*, *Mat.* 12. 31. Yea, it's impossible to some, even living, to be renewed unto repentance, the means of pardon\* *Heb.* 6. 6. Yea, we read in the (g) History of the Church, that the primitive Christians observing the obstinate impenitency of that Monster *Julian* the Apostate, made set prayers, not for him, but against his malice, and against him for his desperate malice sake; they having, happily, therein a spirit of extraordinary (h) discerning then, as *David* before had a spirit of Prophecy, when he made imprecations upon, and prayers against his adversaries, *Pf.* 109. 2. As touching prayer for the dead, as, among all the variety of Sacrifices appointed for the Jewes of old, there was none at all for the dead; so neither hath it any precept, promise, or example, in all the allowed Canon of sacred Scripture now extant. And thirdly,

(f) *speßat* *ut*  
2 *Pet.* 3. 16.

\* *Commodiffi-*  
*me accipitur hic*  
*locus de peccato*  
*in spiritum san-*  
*ctum.* Jo. Ger-  
ard. loc. com.  
rom. 2. c. 24.  
f. 108.

(g) *Theodoret.*  
*Hist.* l. 4. c. 17.  
19.

(h) *1 Cor.* 12.  
10,

that this place is to be understood of such as live, it's apparent from this very Text, because no man can [\*see] his brother sinning after death; besides this, even by the School-mens owne confession, soules departed are *extra statum merendi, & demerendi*, out of a condition of meriting or demeriting by action; and if soules in their imaginary Purgatory, make an end of sinning, in vaine shall we pray for pardon.

\* 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>o</sup>

Leaving then these erroneous conceipts about this sin, come we, next, to examine the Nature of it, according to the Orthodox judgements of Reformed Divines, well travelled in this question, and regulating their resolves herein according to the word of God.

Now, we shall the better discover this, if we particularly view the several parts and branches thereof; for it is a compound sin, consisting of many ingredients.

I shall draw up all under these heads, searching,

1. What it supposeth.
2. What it implyeth.
3. What it drawes with it.

Or, in other Termes, to the same effect.

1. The Antecedent.
2. The Concomitants.
3. The Consequents of this sin.

First of all, the necessary Antecedents, or supposals of this sin, and these are,

1. Knowledge of the Gospel, and of the truth therein revealed concerning Jesus Christ, and all the rich and (i) precious Promises of life and salvation, in and by him: wherefore, they are said to be once enlightened, *Heb. 6. 4.* (k) *φωτισθέντες*, to have a great measure of Illumination in the mysteries of the Gospel; and againe, *Heb. 10. 26.* to have received the knowledge of the truth, and to have known the way of righteousness, *2 Pet. 2. 21.* & *1 Tim. 4. 1.* to have dogmaticall faith, or doctrine of truth, men ignorant of the Gospel may

(i) 2 Pet. 1. 4.

(k) Vide Hæc verba exponente optimè Jo. Gerar. Tract. de Pœnitent. c. 4. f. 16. tom 3. loc. Com.



(1) Act 26. 11.

(m) 1 Tim. 1.  
13.

sin mortally, and unto death, yet, during that state of simple ignorance, for want of the right means of illumination, are not capable of this sin, therefore also **Paul**, though he was a Blasphemer, an Oppressor, exceedingly (1) mad in persecuting the way, and professors of Christ, yet was received to mercy, for what he did, he did (m) ignorantly, in the time of his unbelief: and therefore Divines truly judge, that howsoever Turks, Infidels, Pagans, perish (without repentance) everlastingly, through ignorance of the truth, yet sin they not against the holy Ghost, not this particular sin here said to be unto death.

2. Besides this knowledge, which happily may be occasioned by some general declaration of the truth of the Gospel; there must be not a confused apprehension alone, but also a clear and distinct understanding, and a full conviction of the judgement, so that they cannot but see, and know, that 'tis the truth which they set themselves against; therefore the terms, *Heb. 10. 26.* and *2 Pet. 2. 21.* are remarkable, it is not *γινώσκω*, but *καὶ γινώσκω*, not a bare notice, and literal understanding of the truth, but *καὶ γινώσκω*, an acknowledgement of the same; as they spake, *Acts 4. 16.* *What shall we do to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them, is manifest to all them that dwell in Hierusalem, and we cannot deny it.* To this purpose is that saying of our Saviour, *John 15. 22.* *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, that is, not simply none, but none in comparison; but now they have no cloak, πρόφασις, no colour, or (n) pretence of plea, by way of excuse.*

(n) In spiritu  
sanctum pec-  
cant, qui divi-  
nae veritati, cu-  
jus fulgore sic  
perstringuntur,  
ut ignorantiam  
causari neque-  
ant, tamen de-  
stinata malitia  
resistunt, in hoc  
tantum ut resi-  
stant. Calvin  
Inst. 1. 3. c. 3.  
§. 22.

3. To these some add a third degree, as a preparative also to this sin, and that is some kind of formall profession of what they have entertained into their judgements; so *Simon Magus* joyned himselfe to the Disciples, *Acts 8. 13.* submitted to Baptisme, as one (it seems) desirous by that Character, and cognizance

to



to be known, and taken for a Christian : some partial obedience, and reformation they yield to the truth, intermitting the practice of their old sins, and out of some (°) taste of the good word of God, being affected with the comforts it contains, they take some fleshly (P) joy therein, in hope to partake the blessed state of Gods Children in the life to come ; in which case S. Peter saith, that they are *washed after a sort, from their old sins, and have escaped the pollutions of the world*; 2 Pet. 2. 18. 20. But to this third step they ascend not all, who fall into this sin ; The (q) *Pharisees*, that gave first occasion to our Saviour to speak of it, we read not either to have reformed their errors of life, or judgement, or so much as to have entertained the Gospel, and truth taught by our Saviour, into profession, yet have this sin charged upon them : and therefore me thinks its no absurdity to say, there are degrees even in this sin unto death ; but knowledge, and conviction sufficiently disposeth unto this sin. And thus far of the Antecedents.

(°) Heb. 6. 5.

(P) Mat. 13. 20

(q) Mat. 12. 24

Secondly, Follow next the Concomitants, or those things which doe accompany this sin, or which it doth imply.

Now herein are considerable, partly the Facts, and partly also the Motives of the committers of this same.

The Facts, some are common to all ; some, peculiar to those that have highest dispositions towards saving grace : In relation to the former sort, there is,

1. Abnegation and denyall of the truth of the Gospel received, against distinct \* knowledge and || conviction of enlightned conscience ; and this denyall usually joyned with blasphemy, and reproachfull, contumelious rayling against Gods truth, as those *Pharisees*, Mat. 12. 24. though they could not but see Gods power in the miracles wrought by our Saviour, yet blasphemously impute those mighty works of the Spirit of God, to the Prince of devils, even to *Beelzebub*, that is,

\* Rom. 1. 32.

|| John 8. 9.

to the Lord of Flies, as th: Hebrew word imports.

2. Opposing and oppugning by all means the propagation of the truth; its noted of *Pharisees*, that they had made an Ordinance, that whosoever confessed, or joyned himselfe to Christ, he should be cast out of their Synagogue, as was the blind man miraculously restored to sight (though borne blind) by Christ, *Job. 9. 34.* and as it's noted of *Julian*, that infamous Revolt, not onely by feare and fraud, but even by rewards and preferments, he laboured to draw Christians to blaspheme, and to abjure the *Galilean* (as that miscreant (r) scoffingly called Christ) and to joyne with him in the worship of Idols.

(r) Christum  
subinde Galila-  
um [per igno-  
miniam] voca-  
vit, & septē  
contra eundem  
libros blasphe-  
mos evomuit.  
Ignatius. Ve-  
nerus, in vita  
ejus.

3. To these may be added violent persecution of the Professors of the Christian Truth, for Truths sake, to the utmost of power, *Job. 8. 40.* They [sought] to kill Christ himselfe who told them the truth, which he had heard of God; and *John 5. 16.* it's said, that the *Jewes persecuted Jesus*; yea, and after his crucifixion, made use of all manner of instruments, whom they thought likely to be brought over to their party, some devout, and honourable women (abusing the weaknesse of the sexe to strengthen their owne violence) and the chief men of a City, to raise persecution against *Paul* and *Barnabas*, for preaching Christ Jesus unto the people at *Antioch. 13. 50.*

Now, in those that are brought nearer unto Christ, there goeth with this sin, a willfull desertion of the truth, and Apostacy from it; *2 Pet. 2. 21.* They turne back from the holy Commandement delivered unto them. But, this point being very tender, it must accordingly be handled with caution and warinesse; and therefore you must here remember that ancient distinction, betwixt *lapsus*, and *prolapsio*, particular falls, and falling away: A spirituall man may be overtaken in a fault, *Gal. 6. 1.* ἐν τῇ παραπτώματι, by a slip with his foot (ἀπὸ τοῦ παραπίπτειν) yea, very grievous falls. We read of Gods

owne

owne dear servants, who yet have recovered their standing in the Church of God; even a just man may fall seven times a day, that is, often in the (f) day of his life-time ( whether ye understand that fall of sin, as some, or by sin into affliction, as others expound it ) yet he still keeps the name of a just man, for that he riseth againe, *Pro. 24. 16. Though he fall, saith the sweet finger of Israel, he shall not utterly be cast downe, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand,* *Psal. 37. 24.* Corruption even in the most mortified Saints, sticks like to the spriggs of Ivy in an old wall, which though it be often lopped, yet it will be sprouting againe forth, and hardly at all removed, or universally eradicated till the old wall it selfe be pulled down; sin that (t) body of death will not, as a Jebusite in Canaan, quite out of our coasts, till the death of the body, and by the occasion of sins inhabitation, variety of temptations, from the world, from the flesh, and from the devil, like the sons of Zerviah to David, prove (w) too hard for the best men, oft-times, in many particulars: That of Peter is almost peerlesse, so against his knowledge and conscience, execrably denying the knowledge of Christ, *Mat. 26.* And the like read we of sundry in the Primitive Church drawn, through fear, to deny the truth, and to worship Idols; concerning many of whom, the Fathers of the Church, Ambrose and Austin concluded, that they were not to be denied penance, or pardon, their very [x desire] to be restored to the Church, testifying, that there falls were of infirmity, not of malice; wherefore, partiall declinations, whether in judgement, as those effascinated Galatians declined, *Gal. 3. 1.* Or in zeal, and affection, as the Angel of the Church in *Ephesus, Re. 2. 4.* or in practice, wherein all of us com short sometimes, either in the matter, or in the manner, or in the measure of performance; yea often inordinate acts, like sprigs, or suckers under the choycest graff, break forth; these partiall declinations, I say, must be distinguished from this Apostacy,

(f) John 9. 4.  
 εως εως οβριος  
 εως ημε, St.  
 Chrysost.

(t) Rom. 7. 24.

(w) 2 Sam. 3.  
 39.

(x) Neh. 1. 11.



(y) Jun. in  
Paral.

stasy, which we call whole, it being as (y) *Junius* hath described it, *Totius, ex toto, in totum defectio*, a defection of the whole man, inward and outward, in judgment, conscience, will, memory, affections, from all Gospel-truth, and gracious goodnesse, to all impiety, joyned with an obstinate full resolution never to embrace the same, or any part thereof againe.

These are their Facts.

(z) Mat. 7. 6.

<sup>a</sup> S. August. de  
Temp. Ser. 4.  
59. Vide P.  
Lombard. 2. l.  
Dist. 43. lit.  
A. B. C. D.

<sup>b</sup> I Pet. 5. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Vide Pere-  
rij Disputat.  
ad Io. c. 13.

<sup>d</sup> Joh. 12. 6.

<sup>e</sup> I Tim. 6. 10.

<sup>f</sup> 2 Tim. 4. 10.

<sup>g</sup> I Joh. 3. 14.

The Motive thereto, which specially gives the form, specifically framing it as it were to its proper nature, is Malice, obstinate spight, destinate hatred, wherein they are carried against the Gospel, & all those that embrace and profess it, treading under foot (even as (z) swine doe *Margarites*, and precious pearls) the Son of God, counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, doing despite unto the spirit of grace, Heb. 10. 29. that made <sup>a</sup> *Austin* describe it thus, *Cum post agnitionem Dei per gratiam Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quisquam oppugnat fraternitatem, & adversus ipsam gratiam, quâ reconciliatus est Deo, invidentie facibus agitur*: When grace, for pure grace sake, is maliciously resisted, so that the grace of the spirit is the very ground of this whole pertinacious spight against the Spirit, the <sup>b</sup> God of all sanctifying and saving grace. And this is the reason S. Peter thus sinned not, because not spight, but feare prevailed with him; That hath also made it questionable, whether <sup>c</sup> *Judas* sinned against the Holy Ghost, in betraying his Master, because his fact seems not to have issued so much out of malice against our Saviours person or doctrine, but from his covetousnesse, and love of <sup>d</sup> the money-bag, which the Apostle calleth the <sup>e</sup> root of all evill. That made it disputable also, whether *Demas* his forsaking the Apostle, be censurable of this sin, for that not hatred of *Pauls* person, but love of the <sup>f</sup> present world withdrew him: Yea, as we say not every <sup>g</sup> love of Gods children is a token of our translating from death to life, unlesse they



they be loved, *eo Nomine*, because they are gracious; so not every hatred, or persecution, no not malicious of Gods children is to be so censured, except grace be that that mens malice is carried against, as it was in wicked Cain, against his righteous brother Abel, 1 John 3. 12. It is a generall backsliding from the whole truth of the Gospel acknowledged, and a malicious oppugning of the same, and that by all imaginable wicked meanes whatsoever.

And thus far also of the Concomitants of this sin unto death.

Thirdly, and lastly come to be observed the Consequents, or dangerous effects of the same sin.

And these are,

1. Obstinate, and finall impenitency; obstinacy is, *Indurata mentis in malitiâ pertinacia*, as <sup>h</sup> Peter Lombard describes it, a stubborn froward persisting of an hardened heart, in willfull malice, by which a man becomes, and is made impenitent, Heb. 6. 4. 6. It's impossible, not difficult onely, as some mince the matter) faith the Apostle, that such enlightned Apostates should be renewed againe unto repentance; and this too, not through defect in Gods mercy, which is as himselfe is, \* boundlesse, infinite, incomprehensible, but through the just judgment of God upon contempt of such grace offered to them, giving them up unto a <sup>i</sup> reprobate mind, and unto <sup>k</sup> hardnesse of heart, and to such a state as they cannot repent, Rom. 2. 5. sometimes, perhaps, some of them com to a *μεταμέλεια*, to som after thought-taking, when they struggle with the wrath of God on their guilty black conscience, and wish as Judas, that their sins had never been committed, only through horror under the apprehension of the everlasting vengeance of God that awaites them; but never to a *μεταβολα*, or a change of their minds; so that impenitency finall is one Consequent of this dreadfull and deadly transgression.

<sup>h</sup> Pet. Lomb.  
ubi supra.

\* Psal. 145. 9.

<sup>i</sup> Rom. 1. 28.

<sup>k</sup> Rom. 2. 5.  
Exod. 7. 13.  
Rom. 9.

2. Peer-

\* Mat. 12. 44,  
45.

1 2 Cor. 7. 1.

\* Vid. Nicho-  
lan. de Cle-  
mangis.

<sup>m</sup> Conf. Mar.  
3. 29. & Luc.  
12. 10.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. 9. 22.

<sup>o</sup> Gen. 19. 33.

35.

2. Peerlesse vitiosity in heart and manners; such men thus totally fallen, and finally rendred impenitent, become in all viciousnesse far \* more vile then ever they were before their calling, 2 Pet. 2. 20. their latter end is worse with them, than their beginning: and it hath been found most true in all experience, that none ever have proved more swinish to wallow in the mire of all <sup>1</sup> pollutions of flesh and spirit, then have vile Apostates; nor ever any more insatiable Horseleaches, to suck out the blood of the saints of God, than such who have metamorphized their first Christian profession, into an after degenerate and Antichristian persecution. \* Rome, since it became Antichristian hath proved more vile, then when it was at first Paganish.

3. Irremissibility, and finall impardonableness: Wherefore I say unto you, saith our Saviour. (<sup>m</sup>) Mat. 12. 31, 32. all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, nor in the World to come. Now that all sin, and all manner of other sins (but this one) have been forgiven unto men, namely unto men capable of forgiveness, such are onely the elect of God, and the believing penitents (for its a knowne Maxime in Orthodox Divinity, *Nulla peccata remittuntur reprobis*, No sins are pardoned to the reprobate, and the obstinately impenitent) This, I said, I shall manifest unto you; for as in the brightest serenity of the Moon, so the Church (which Solomon resembleth unto the Moon, Cant. 6. 10.) hath when it is at the clearest, in its militant condition here below, some blots, and spots that doe blemish often the pulchritude and beauty of it: inso-much that we read of some great Saints sinning, particularly, even grosse and enormous sins, so <sup>n</sup> Noab fell by drunkennesse, <sup>o</sup> Lot by incest with his owne daughters,

ters, <sup>p</sup> David by adultery, <sup>q</sup> Solomon by idolatry, <sup>r</sup> Peter by perjury, even all the <sup>f</sup> Apostles by partiall infidelity, yet these found place for repentance, and upon that, remission and pardon; yee shall read in the <sup>t</sup> Genealogy of our Saviour Jesus Christ, a catalogue of persons <sup>u</sup> speckled like *Jacobs* sheep (watered in the gutters of *Laban*) into variety of sins, some *Jewes*, some *Gentiles*, all, or most of them *tainted*; for this end, among others, recorded, that miserable sinners might know that Christ came into the world as the universal Physitian, both able and willing to <sup>w</sup> heal every diseased soul, yea such a Physitian as comes home often unsent for, going <sup>x</sup> about doing good, and curing all <sup>y</sup> kind and <sup>z</sup> manner of diseases; he is that <sup>a</sup> pittying *Samaritan*, who cannot passe by a <sup>b</sup> wounded spirit without pouring in the oyle of his mercy, had such but first a <sup>c</sup> fight, and <sup>d</sup> sense of their own wounds; yea, he was such a Physitian, who for to save the lives, and to redeem the souls of penitent patients from death, most chearfully <sup>e</sup> laid down his owne life, <sup>f</sup> praying for them that <sup>g</sup> mocked, <sup>h</sup> reviled, <sup>i</sup> crucified, <sup>k</sup> murdered him; yea here in this Scripture (but now named to you) that the blasphemy of the Son of man, that is, of Christ himself, who veiling for a time the glorious splendor of his Divinity, by the flesh of his obscure Humanity, was supposed by the ignorant *Jewes*, to be but a <sup>l</sup> mean man, though he were, at the same time, the <sup>m</sup> King of glory, and so they filled their mouths with reproaches of him, charging him with whole volleys of the highest blasphemies, stiling him <sup>n</sup> deceiver, <sup>o</sup> glutton, contemptuously, <sup>p</sup> *Samaritan*, <sup>q</sup> this fellow, a <sup>r</sup> friend of *Publicans* and *sinners*, one who had a <sup>s</sup> devil, and what miracles he did, he wrought them by the <sup>t</sup> Prince of devils; O horrid! lo yet and see, even this blasphemy, so high, so notorious, so dishonourable, is pardonable to the repenting blasphemers; but the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, **מִפְּשַׁעַר רַב** [ *mi peshcha rab* ] that great offence, with an **אֵלֶּיךָ**, so called by King David, who prayed ear-

C

nest-

<sup>p</sup> 2 Sam. 11. 4.  
<sup>q</sup> 1 Kings 11. 5.  
<sup>r</sup> Mat. 26. 74.  
<sup>s</sup> Mar. 4. 40.  
<sup>t</sup> Mat. 1.  
<sup>u</sup> Gen. 30. 39.

<sup>w</sup> Psa. 41. 4.  
<sup>x</sup> Acts 10. 38.  
<sup>y</sup> Luke 4. 40.  
<sup>z</sup> Mat. 4. 23.  
<sup>a</sup> Luk. 10. 33.  
<sup>b</sup> Pro. 18. 14.  
<sup>c</sup> Hof. 5. 13.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Kin. 8. 33.  
<sup>e</sup> Jo. 10. 17, 18.  
<sup>f</sup> Luk. 23. 34.  
<sup>g</sup> Matth. 27.  
29, 30, 31.  
<sup>h</sup> Mar. 27. 39.  
1 Pet. 2. 13.  
<sup>i</sup> Mat. 27. 35.  
Phil. 2. 8.  
<sup>k</sup> Acts 2. 23.  
& 3. 15. &  
7. 52.  
<sup>l</sup> Phil. 2. 7, 8.  
<sup>m</sup> Psa. 24. 7, 8.  
<sup>n</sup> Mat. 27. 63.  
<sup>o</sup> Mat. 11. 19.  
<sup>p</sup> Jo. 8. 48.  
<sup>q</sup> Mat. 12. 24.  
Joh. 9. 29.  
<sup>r</sup> Mr. 11. 19.  
<sup>s</sup> Jo. 8. 52.  
<sup>t</sup> Mat. 12. 24.



<sup>u</sup> Lev. 24. 16.

Vid. *Simon  
majolum*, lib.  
De perfidiâ  
Indæor. p 73.  
& 241, 242,  
&c.

*Blasphemia, &  
spiritus Blas-  
phemia diffe-  
runt: spiritus  
blasphemia sus-  
pirat ad odium  
Dei: sicut spiri-  
tus sanctus ad  
dei amorem;*  
*Blasphemia re-  
mittetur, spiri-  
tus a Blasphemia non.* Joh.  
Altenstaig in  
ser. Theolog.  
in voc. Blas-  
phemia, p.  
102, 103. v. d.  
Dieterie: Dn:  
19. post Trin.  
p. 747, 748.  
in 4<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>w</sup> Jo. 16. 8.

nessly to be preserved from it, P/ 19. 13. This blasphemy (God in his justice denying the grace of repentance to it) this is utterly irremissible, everlastingly unpardonable, even unto all eternity; wherefore, it is added, *Neither in this world, nor in the world to come*, not, in this world, because, say some, blasphemy coming (at least during the Jewish administration) under the cognizance, & power of the Magistrate, it was no way, by no means capable of any reprieve at all, but the soul <sup>u</sup> so sinning must be cut off without mercy, from Gods people, and be stoned to death; or more generally thus, not in this world by any promise, or assurance of it at all from heaven, or the word of God, the patent of penitents (but not of such final impenitents) for pardon: nor in the *world to come*, understand it thus, not as supposing, by that expression, any hopes remaining (after death) to any other kind of sinners, whose life expired, as it was lead in a course of presumptuous impenitency (as the great Patrons of purgatory would perswade their ignorant & besotted pro felices) but this is only a distribution, or divisive speech, intended not to signify things divers, but to aggravate and to exaggerate the same thing; and used it is, it may be, purposely to lay a stumbling-block in the way of the obstinate, to restrain and to withhold them from sinning so desperately, and with an high hand against the Lord, so as thereby they wilfully cut themselves off from all present, future, or succeeding hopes of mercy to their graceless souls: In a word, the sin against the father is remitted by the redemption of the son; the sin against the Son is pardoned through the application of his merit, by the Holy Ghost, but the sin against the Spirit hath no remission, because there is no way of expiation, there being by God in judgment intercluded the way to the mean of mercy, which is repentance; such men therefore (so sinning) shall the spirit himself <sup>w</sup> convince of judgment unto confusion; for saith the great Apostle, *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth,*

*truth,*



truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, Heb. 10. 26, 27. And for this cause is it, that this sin is here stiled by S. John, *ἡμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον* a sin unto death, and that, not only because in its own nature it deserves the common death, consisting in the separation of the soul from the body, for this is the wages of every sin, Rm 6. 23. but because it being the will of God to shut up under final impenitency the men so sinning, it merits, and so shall infallibly incur not that only which is called the common way of all the earth in the temporal death, but also the sentence and sense of the second death; which second or eternal death consisteth in the everlasting separation of both soul and body, from Gods gracious and glorious presence (which is the punishment also) & withall (which is the punishment of sense) the plunging of both into inexpressible torments with the devil, his accursed Angels, and all other damned blaspheming spirits, even for ever and ever.

This is the sin, for the nature of it very hainous, and for the danger of it (as ye have it thus declared to you) most dismal and full of horror.

A word or two further of the stile or titles given hereunto in holy writ, which was the second general Head of my division proposed; of which succinctly, that (withall considering the great affairs ensuing) I may hasten to my Application, in which indeed consisteth all the marrow, and \* fatnes, even the very life and vigor of every solid Sermon, and divine discourse.

The stile or title given to it by our Saviour, is, as ye heard but now, Mat. 12. 31. *The Blasphemy of the holy Ghost*, that is, the endeavouring to dishonour the holy Ghost, it is a Greek word, *παρατὸ βλάσφημον τὸ πνεῦμα*, as it were hurting (if I may dare so to expresse it) the same, and blurring the glory of the holy Spirit? But why of the holy Ghost? and not of the Father, or of the Son?

\* Iosb. 23. 14.

† Rev. 2. 11.

‡ Mat. 25. 41.  
46. 2 Thess.  
2. 9.

\* Pl. 36. 8.

Quest.

is not the whole Trinity one Spirit, Job. 4. 24. each person is God, equal in majesty & glory, and God is a Spirit?

There is an inquiry made, Whether, indeed, a man may not so sin against one person of the Trinity, that in that Fact, he sins not against the whole Trinity? To which the resolution is, That virtually, and in the issue, the sin reacheth to the whole three persons; however, intentionally, one alone be stricken at.

Ans<sup>w</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Alex. Hal. f.

704. in fronte

<sup>b</sup> Durand. l. 2.

dist. 13. qu. 1.

in senti-

<sup>c</sup> S. August. l. 1.

c. 11. De Trin.

<sup>d</sup> Ursin. q. 7.

Catech.

<sup>e</sup> Gerard: quâ

supra. f. 109.

Alexander \* Halensis (the Patriarch of the School Divines) <sup>b</sup> Durandus, and other of that rank, conceive, that there are divine properties, in respect of their exercise, appropriated to the several persons, as power to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and goodness to the holy Ghost; so that a sin of weakness or infirmity, is committed against the Father, that is, against the power of God; a sin of ignorance is committed against the Son, that is, against the wisdom of God; a sin of wickedness, malice, or hatred, is committed against the holy Spirit, that is, against the goodness of God. But waving these curiosities, spun upon the wheel of mens quaint apprehensions, however in themselves (thus applied) not wholly impertinent, this blasphemy is so called, not because it's intended so much against the <sup>c</sup> person of the holy Ghost, the third person in the blessed Trinity, as against the proper <sup>d</sup> operation and efficacious work of the holy Ghost. Dr <sup>e</sup> Gerard (a most learned Lutheran Divine) thus gives his exposition of this stile; It's so stiled, sayes he, partly in regard of the ministration of the spirit, which is the glorious Gospel, he applying and sweetly diffusing into the hearts of all contrite and disconsolate Christians, the comforts and promises of grace therein contained, through the blood of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 8. in respect whereof he is likewise stiled, The Comforter, John 15. 26. And partly also in regard of his office, which is illumination, and enlightning of the minds of his elect, Eph. 1. 18. in respect whereof he is in his operation compared to fire, Mat. 3. 11. as well for light, as for heat, and therefore the shunning of that light is called, the Quenching of the Spirit,

rit, 1 Theff. 5. 19. And lastly, in regard of his gracious testimony, and witnesse, testifying and witnessing to the spirit of believers, That they are the sons of God, Rom. 8. 16. To which also may be added his directive manuduction, leading the elect into all necessary fundamental truth, Job. 16. 13. And so much, in sum, for the reason of this stile given hereto in holy writ.

We may not, in the next place, omit to take notice of the Epithite that is given to it in another Scripture, at which I gave a glance but now ; it is in Psa. 19. 13. where it is called by the Prophet, *The [Great] Offence*, to indeed by an ἡμεῖς, even without peer, *Non est majus delictum*, amongst all sins that Cast-away's fall into, as there are many foul and erroneous, none so great as this : Truth is, whatever a man can think of to aggravate a sin to the height of haynous, in this all concur : Their Facts imply <sup>f</sup> *Contempt of the Son of God*, *prophanation of the blood of the Covenant*, contumely to the holy Ghost ; besides all this, *Foulest ingratitude* to that God who offered so great grace to their souls, declared by their blaspheming the truth, oppugning the speaking of it, so glorious to God, so healthful to men ; Circumstances yet make it fouler, the Motive especially, for *That it issues out of malice, and destinate spight against the majesty of God*. No marvaile then was it, that our Saviour taught it to be unpardonable, that is, not as some interpret, hardly pardonable, but utterly incapable of pardon, through a just Ordinance of God, shutting up the fountaine of his mercy against the souls of such impious and godlesse miscreants : and hither, to this purpose, may well be applyed that passage in *Solomons Proverbs*, Pro. 28. 18. where he saith, that *whoso walketh uprightly, shall be saved, but he that is perverse in his wayes, shall fall at once* ; the emphasis lyeth in that claute [at once] *Semel dicitur cadere qui irreparabiliter cadit*, as *g Halensis* expounds it, he is said to fall at once, who falls beyond hope of recovery, irreparably, and so that text

<sup>f</sup> Heb. 10. 29.

<sup>g</sup> Alex. Hal.  
part. 4. qu. 12.  
mem. 5. art. 1.



is meant, not of a common slipping aside, but of a final backsliding (*Perversis graditur viis, id est, perfecte versis*) which happeneth in final impenitency: and this passage of Solomon seems to me to be equivalent to what our Saviour pronounced on those blasphemous Pharisees, Joh. 9. 41. when he declared that their sin [remained] that whereas a sin of ignorance (though in it selfe enormous) might be capable of pardon, which is evident from many Scriptures and examples, as Num. 15. 27, 28. Psal. 19. 12. Heb. 9. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 13. Acts 17. 30. Yet, their presumptuous blaspheming against professed knowledge, clear light, and evidence of truth, this their sin was not a slight or a transient act, and so to be passed over as sometimes God did Jacob, without being [seen] or observed for punishment, Num. 23. 21. but it is a sin [remaining] as it were written with the <sup>h</sup> poynt of a diamond; the Actors of it being, as the Prophet speaks, alwayes <sup>i</sup> before the Lord, that he might have both them and their sin in his sight, and remembrance, never to blot out, or to remit it.

So then, to recapitulate the sum of all, the Sin against the Holy Ghost is no lesse then, *A willfull malicious, and obstinate denying of the foundation, renouncing Christ Jesus as the Mediator and Redeemer of the world; It is a totall Apostacy from the Faith, when the whole man revolteth from the whole Christian Religion, wholly, with an obstinate resolution never to returne to it any more; neither is it possible for him that is guilty thereof to mourn, and lament for his sins; his stubborn and reprobate heart is not so tender, but being past all sorrow and feeling, rather (as <sup>k</sup> one farther adds to expresse the measure of it) rejoiceth and boasteth in his desperate and malicious obstinacy.*

This is the sin, for nature most hainous, for the issue most dangerous, dreadful, formidable; in the mention whereof, we think the powers of mens souls cannot but be shaken, their thoughts trouble them, and as <sup>m</sup> Belshazzar's at the sight of the hand-writing upon the wall,

<sup>h</sup> Jer. 17. 1.  
<sup>i</sup> Ps. 109. 15.

Legatur Bezai  
ad 1 Io. 5. 16.  
fused explican-  
tem naturam  
peccati istius:  
Confer: BP.  
Usher, in his  
Sum of Chri-  
stian Religion  
p. 151, 152.  
Edit. 1648.  
<sup>k</sup> Mr Jo. Down  
in Tract: a-  
gainst Mr  
Baxter.

<sup>l</sup> Soli filij iræ  
iram non senti-  
unt, sed letan-  
tur, & exult-  
ant in rebus  
pessimis. Ber.  
Pi. 52. 1. Iam.  
4. 15. Deut.  
29. 19.

<sup>m</sup> Dan. 5. 5.

wall (whilest he sat quaffing in the vessels of the sanctuary) the joynts of their loynes be loosed, and their knees smite one against another.

Come we now, in order, to the Use and Application: Beloved Christians, according to the grievous nature of this sin, so let all those use the meditation of it, whom God hath called to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that by meditation of the foulness of it, their care may be increased to preserve themselves from it: It's a great favour God hath granted us, that *unto us he hath vouchsafed, in the means, the knowledge of himselfe, in the face of Jesus Christ*, he hath not dealt so with many Nations more, that herewithall he hath daigned also to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, to know the *mystery of Godlinesse*, he hath not dealt so with many Children of the Church; many (the more is the pity) live stil in grosse ignorance of necessariest Articles: To some of us yet more, that he hath given us *faith to believe it*; woe is me! that there should be amongst us many of ripe understanding, that yet dare question the truth of the Gospel: yea, to some yet more, he hath granted *sense of the comfort*, of the *sweetness*, and perhaps also of the *power thereof to reform us*: Take heed Brethren, that so great favour of God be not frustrate by our *unthankfull Apostacy*.

Among many *Preservatives* that might happily be set down, to keep men from Apostacy, and from this great sin, give me leave to offer to your considerations, these following.

1. Labour by all means to fasten on your hearts the *love of that saving truth wherein you have been enlightned*; strong delusion is sent upon men that received not the love of the truth; there is a disease of latter times called the *Rickets*, when Children rather swel then grow in the upper parts, and find a luxation of members, and a debility downwards; so it's become now likewise a disease in the spiritual part of men, they swel like the  
ancient

Use 1.

<sup>n</sup> Psa 147. 20.  
<sup>i</sup> Cor. 1. 21.

<sup>o</sup> Eph. 1. 18.  
<sup>p</sup> Eph. 3. 3, 4.  
<sup>i</sup> Tim. 3. 16.

<sup>q</sup> Phil. 1. 29.  
Eph. 2. 8.

<sup>r</sup> Phil. 1. 9.  
<sup>s</sup> *Shew.*  
<sup>t</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 3.  
<sup>u</sup> 2 Cor. 2. 14.  
<sup>v</sup> Rom. 1. 16.  
<sup>w</sup> Ioh. 23. 11.  
Heb. 3. 12.

Preservatives  
against the sin  
against the  
Holy Ghost.

<sup>x</sup> 2 Thess. 2.  
11.

x 1 Cor. 8. 1.

h γινώσκεις

[ οὐκ οἶσιν ]

Cor. 8. 1.

y Rev. 12. 4.

z 1 Sam. 24. 5.

a Joh. 8. 9.

b Pla. 58. 5.

c Ex consuetu-

dine peccandi

Dei merus a-

mittitur, &

contemptus in-

cutitur. S. Aug.

d Eph. 4. 19.

Primo decli-

nantes à medio

capimur, capiti

occidamur, oc-

cacati obduref-

simus, obdura-

ti desperamus :

Cas: in Eth:

\* Conscientia

mala sine des-

peratione non

est. S. Aug.

præf. super.

psal. 31.

ancient *Gnosticks* with knowledge in the brain, with \* puffing speculations swimming in the head, but have little affection of what they so apprehend in pure notion: but my brethren, when all is done, it is not the understanding head, but it is the understanding heart, that availeth to solid happiness: The red y Dragon in the *Revelation*, is observed to have drawn the 3<sup>d</sup> part of those who were as stars for light, with him unto the earth; wherefore, the most experienced Casuists have resolved, That Gods School is more of holy sanctified affection, then of meer notional, or floating speculation: and so it hath been found true in all Histories of the Church, that unsanctified wits abounding with variety of learning, as *Arrius*, *Porphyrie*, and other like; Satan hath made use of to corrupt, and to deprave the truth of the Gospel.

2. Carefully preserve Conscience from known disobedience; it's dangerous to slight the strokes thereof, when it z smites thee for the act, and perpetration of that, whereof thy conscience is a convinced it is sin; when men stop their b ears against the directions of that secret Monitor which God (as his principal Vice-gerent in the soul) hath placed in every bosome, they are in great peril of a down-fall; yea, that's the means, at length to make it silent, and so by degrees in the issue, through c custom, d senses, which insensibility is the most dangerous state of the conscience, *Scio longius à salute absistere membrum quod obstupuit, & ægrum sese non sentientem, periculosius laborare*, as S. Bernard speaks, A stupified member is hardly curable but by corrasives, if at all by them; & there is by far more hope of the curation of one sick (though very far gone) who is sensible of his malady, then of him, who before he doth, or will see his disease, is swallowed up in a miscarriage: That one example is memorable of *Hymineus* and *Alexander*, who having not joyned to their Science \* Conscience, having put away the one, they lost the soundness of the other, and made shipwreck of their Faith, 1 Tim. 1. 19. 20.

3. Cherish



3. Cherish by all means the sweet motions of grace, and of the spirit of God: 1 *Thes*: 5. 19. O take heed, vex him not. *Isa*: 63. 10. grieve him not: *Eph*: 4. 30. rather let thine ears hear that word behind thee, saying: *This is the way, walk ye in it, Isa*. 30. 21: it may be there are many of you here present, who now hear this noise this day, in the Ministry of this very word now spoken into your ears. Be afraid how ye neglect to be <sup>a</sup> lead and guided by this good spirit of God speaking to you in that very <sup>b</sup> word which himself hath <sup>c</sup> inspired; its said to recount the case of many men in this behalf, that throw off such motions with disregard, and deem them (through the <sup>d</sup> deceitfulness of their hearts, the <sup>e</sup> deceitfulness of sin, & the cunning insinuations of Satan) but fits of melancholy arising from the naturall complexion of the body, or some sudden qualnes of conscience that do surprise them. B. love I Brethren, I beseech you consider that when God offers such grace, he offers himselfe to you as to Children, if ye be led by the Spirit of God, and that not only in point of <sup>g</sup> direction, and of <sup>h</sup> instigation (unto which steps is possible, as if I had time might be demonstrated for an unregenerate man to ascend) but chiefly in respect of pre- valence, so that by way of eminence, and ruling pre- dominance, you are led by him, then are you the sons of God in good earnest: 4. Prudently notice, and with all spirituall <sup>i</sup> circumspection, observe thy declinings, and abatements of thy measures of grace, and how thy devotion, or zeal (which should not like *Ishuas* sun stand & still, but like *Dauids* sun rather rejoyce as a Gy- ant to run a race on wards in its course) how it doth <sup>m</sup> go back like *Hezekiabs* sun, in its degrees; and never leave the strictest use of the most conscientious means, till thou hast recovered thy antient measures: *Rev*: 2. 4. 5. Yea I will be bold to say thus much further: No Christian can possibly have any solid assurance upon firme grounds, of any truth of saving grace begun

D

in

a Joh. 16. 13.  
Psal. 143. 10.  
b *Isa*. 59. 21.  
c 2 Tim. 3. 16.  
d Jer. 17. 9.

e Heb. 3. 13.

f Rom. 8. 14.

g Psal. 25. 12.  
Mic. 6. 8.  
h *Isa* 30. 21.

Rom. 8. 14  
i Ephes. 5. 15.  
a *xpi* *g* *5*.

k Josh. 10. 13.  
l Psal. 19. 5.  
2 King. 20. 10.  
m *Isa*. 38. 8.

\* 1 Cor. 3. 5,

6, 7.

\* 1 Pet. 5. 10.

\* *Indulgendum  
somno est, ut  
corpus reparet,  
non resolvat, &  
vires revocet,  
non enervet.*

Chrysolog. ser.  
24.

*Non sit sepultura  
suffocari, sed  
requies lass.*

Hieron.

\* Tit. i. 12.

\* Matt. 20. 6.

\* 1 Pet. 4. 15.

in the heart, who is not carefull to cherish, and to encrease it by those means which God hath sanctified to that end, and therefore he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors, and Teachers for the work of the Ministry: not only to gather the Saints together, by \* planting of true Doctrine in the Church; but also to \* confirm, strengthen, settle, stablish, yea to [perfect] the same Saints, under the use of the same means of their first calling; i.e. to this purpose: *Eph: 4. 11. 12, 13.* to the same effect is it, that we read *Cant: 3. 1, 1, 3, 4* Where we may easilie discover the behaviour of the Spouse, or Church of Christ languishing under the absence, or the withdrawing of her Misticall Husband Jesus Christ: what doth she do? Why, make diligent enquiry, and strict search after him, leaving no wayes or means unattempted, and is restless till she had again found him whom her soul loved: in those wayes wherein (in all probability) she had left him, in those when she sought him. Yet there seeking she found him not: *By night in my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not;* in her Bed the place of ease, and rest, (the means when she had too \* much indulged thereto) lulling her self asleep in a supine regardlesnes, and security, there she found him not: Christ hath no inward sensible communion with a resty, unactive, lazy soul, for Christians must not be Cretians, *γαστρις ἀργοι*, \* slow bellies: Well, what course doth she take next, I will rise now (saith she) leave my drowzy temper, and being risen, I will go about the City in the streets, and in the broad wayes, I will seek him whom my soul loveth, that is, among those who stand \* idle, & loitring in the Market places, unemployed in their own, though \* busie bodies enough, perhaps about the doings of others, or else such as following the guise of wavering times, metemorphosing as it were, and unresolved, or indifferent in the matters of Religion, run on in a full career the smooth broad

broad wayes to what is dangerous, she sought him there, but she missed of her aim, she sought him, but she found him not: Wel, do but observe her in her carriage but a little farther, and then, but not till then, she finds him. *The watchmen that go about the City found me, to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? What are these* \* Watchmen? but those spiritual Pastors, or Ministers, whose office is to give warning, upon due, and seasonable discovery, of the danger of the Soules enemies, as themselves watching over them for good, even as those who must give account in the day of judgment, *Hebr. 13. 17.* Well, the text adds, *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him, whom my soul loveth;* to imply, that whilst she sought for Christ, where indeed He was to be found, namely, *by the footsteps of the flock, and by the shepherds tents:* Cant: 1. 8. there, if any where, among such Instruments of conveying him in the Ministry unto her soul, He was to be heard of, and actually found; By the same Messengers who were first \* sent by God, with a Commission to preach the Gospel of peace, & to bring glad tydings of good things; even by the same (if not in individuall, yet in kinde) did, and doth the Church again recover the presence, and with it the joy, and sweetness thereof to her distressed spirits: to the like purpose also may we hither apply that gloss which S. Bernard gives upon the withdrawing of *Thomas* from the company of the other Apostles unto whom the Lord Christ manifested Himself after his resurrection, but not unto him being then \* away; *Falleris Thomâ sancte, falleris, si ab Apostolorum collegio segregatus invenire Christum speras:* O *Thomas*, thou art deceived, if thou hopest to find Christ severed from the congregation of the Apostles, and Saints of God; Wherefore is it, that the Apostle so zealously exhorts the Hebrews, *Hebr: 10. 25.* not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is: and, that man after Gods own heart, see how restless

\* Ezek. 3. 17.  
Heb. 13. 19.

\* Rom. 10. 15.

\* Joh. 20. 24.



his soul is, till he could (after a forced absence from thence) again visit these amiable tabernacles of the Lord of hosts; mark, I beseech you, what pathetick metaphors or similitudes he borrows to illustrate, or express his zealous anhelations, and gaspings after God; the one of a woman under her *μανία* (with whom there is *passio in ore, & tremor in corde*) her fits of longing, which if unsatisfied endanger swooning, yea often life it self: *Psal: 84. 2. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.* The other of the Hart braying after water, and readie even to sink down dead before the bloodie pursuers; *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God; My soul thirsteth for God for the living God; When shall I come, and appear before God?* His meaning is, to declare the sweet communion he lately had, and now most fervently again desired to renew with God, under the enjoyment of his restored, soul saving Ordinances, dispersed in the Sanctuary: so that this may well be set down as another preservative against this dangerous downfall.

\* *Psal 42. 1, 2.*

5. Take heed, how thou dost allow, or bear with thy self in any presumptuous sin, yea though but in one single particular: If thou willingly lye down under the power, dominion, \*reign of any one known sin, whereof thy judgment and conscience, upon clear evidence of Scripture is convinced that it is a sin, thou canst not promise thy self an immunity, or freedom from the greatest sin: alas! what odds is it, in the issue, whether in the ship sink, or be split in sunder, it be by some insensible, secret leak, or by some violent blast that dasheth the ribs thereof against the rocks? or, if a bird be taken in the gin, whether by one claw, or by the whole body, so it come into the hands of the fowler, as a prey? and, indeed, the Apostle, *2 Tim: 2. 26.* useth the very same metaphor of men held captive at the will of the Devill, they are *ἐξωρημένον*, taken alive

\* *Rom. 6. 12.*

alive, even as a Bird is trapped in a snare, and at the pleasure of the Devil to tempt, or to torment him: one mire may defile a sow, one sword destroy a man, one disease, as well as a thousand bring him to his grave, even one sin unrepented of, endanger the soul to Hell. Now, for the proof of this, consult I beseech you, with that clear Text, Psal: 19. 13. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have [dominion] over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression:* from this Scripture it is very clear that even David himself could not secure himself from this sin, in case he had born with himself under the [reigne] of particular presumptions: Certainly, I dare say he was of his mind, a man as he, enlightened a Member of the Church, living under the dominion of any sin, was endangered to the sin against the Holy Ghost, which here he calls the great transgression: When Conscience once grows insensible of sin, as through [\*custome] of evill every conscience doth; what sin, or degree of sin can a man secure himself from? Eph: 4. 19. When a man is once past feeling, he gives himself to commit sin with greedines, then follows oft in Gods Judgment, spiritual desertion, God gives a man over to the swing of his own corrupt heart, and to the power of Sathan; and he must needs go (we say) whom the Devil drives: Wherefore dear Christians, and Countrymen, \*suffer the word of exhortation, and let the admonition be that of Paul, 2 Tim: 2. 19. *Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* The pure grace of the glorious Gospel is no \*warrant for any impure, ranting licentiousnes: Tremble to bear with thy self in any sin against conscience, nor to let sin reign in thy mortal body, lest thou endanger thy self to this sin, which is unto death.

Beloved, its a great mercy of God to be born in the Church, and to enjoy the priviledges (though but outward) of it, and yet this think of: The state of the children of the Church may prove worse a great deal, than

\* *Tanta est corruptela malæ consuetudinis, ut ab eâ igniculi extinguantur à naturâ dati, exorianturq; vitia contraria.* Cic. li. 1. de Leg.

\* Heb 13. 22.

\* Rom. 6. 1. Gal. 5. 13.

a 2 Thes. 2. 11.

b Deut. 29. 19

han the state of Jews, and Pagans, that never yet gave entertainment to the Gospel, though they have sins enough to damn them, yet they are out of danger of this sin unpardonable; therefore be exhorted, and the more also, for that its strange to see the strong delusion sent upon many, that though they b bless themselves in their wickednes, and add drunkenes to thirst, yet seem to be out of danger of other grosse sins; whereas its demonstrative from what hath been thus collected from this of *David*, that no man can promise himself a freedome from the foulest sins, in whom any sin reigns.

\* 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7.

Heb. 6. 7.

\* Rom. 1. 26, 27.

a Psal. 77. 6.

b Lam. 3. 40.

c Act. 8. 22.

Lastly, (for I hasten) let not that be forgotten of the Apost<sup>le</sup>, Heb: 6. 1. who upon this very ground, admonisheth saying, *Let us go on unto perfection*: compare 2 Pet: 3. 18. *For its impossible that if we fall away*, (he means universally) *we should again be renewed unto a true repentance*; he seems to take it for granted, that there is no mean between seeming sufficiency, and certain Apostacy: and this withall remember, that our growth will be expected, and accounted for, according to the measure of our \* watering, and those means of grace which the Lord hath afforded us; it shall be charged more heavily upon the score of *Chorazin*, and *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum* in the day of Judgment, than upon *Tyre* and *Sidon*, yea or upon *Sodome & Gomorrah*, though those Cities were of most prodigious, and even \* unnaturall abominations: the reason is, because they had more means by preaching miracles, &c. than the other had.

To draw towards a conclusion: Beloved Christians let every one now, upon these severall intimations, seriously a commune with his own heart, and let his spirit make diligent search, examine and b cry himself into what degrees of this sin he hath grown, that as *Peter* spake to that c *Simon*, *If it be possible, bin sin may be forgiven him*, whilst every one endeavours to recover his first estate, and to do his first works. Rev: 2. 4.



We have been many of us brought past the antecedents of this sin; the Lord hath declared unto us the truth of the Gospel, and oh, how pretious, not only in regard of the rarity, but of the valuation and esteem, as the word of God in the dayes of \**Samuel*, was the light thereof, when it first brake out in these parts? I doubt not but with many of us, illumination hath been so clear, that we have been convinced, and some kind of profession most of us have made of the Gospel. And yet alas! lamentable is the state of many <sup>a</sup> resisting the truth, and too much <sup>b</sup> opposing against it, whereby the course of the Gospel is not a little stopped, at least in the purity thereof: Hereunto may be added <sup>c</sup> railings, and <sup>d</sup> blasphemies of the multitude; How many scandals raised, I say not of the persons of the Ministers (though God, wheresoever he hath on earth a Church to gather, or to perfect, he will have a Ministry, even in despite of Hell it self, unto the end of the world) but of the very Doctrine of the Gospel: And is it not too true, that as *Ismael* prosecuted *Isaac*, *Gal*:4.29. so it is now: if any professe but a \*desire to keep conscience void of offence towards God & man is commonly \*the by-word of the People. Brethren, these are fearfull steps, I may not say of malice, for then I wou'd tremble, yea I am forbidden in my Text, to pray for men so sinning: But thus far many have gone, O let such labour to recover themselves. *Faxit*.

Hitherto of the first, and generall use of this point: I come now to apply it with a more particular respect unto such of Gods servants as have a more special interest in his favour, such as are actually regenerate, and born of God. Dearest Christians, this is that which may prevent your own discomfort, that issues many times out of groundles fear, lest your state be as that of those guilty of this sin, hopeles in such sort, that very infirmities, especially where hath been knowledg of Duty, and perhaps some reluctance of conscience, are

\* 1 Sam. 3.1.

<sup>a</sup> Act. 7. 51.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Tim. 2.25

<sup>c</sup> Joh. 9. 28.

1 Cor. 5. 11.

1 Cor. 6. 10.

λογος ος δειναι, rayling dicitur, α λαια & δειναι,

as it were to excoriate, and skin a man: or, λογος ος δειναι παντων, *Eustathius*: A

word wounding like a sharp spear, by *David* the wicked tongue is compared to a sharp razor, *Psal*. 52.2.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. 13. 18.

<sup>e</sup> Act. 24. 16

*Use* 2.

*a* Jer. 32. 40.  
*b* 2 Cor. 1. 20  
*c* Heb. 10. 29.  
*d* Heb. 12. 24.  
*e* Gen. 4. 10.  
*f* 1 Joh. 1. 7.  
*g* 2 Cor. 1. 12.

\* 1 Pet. 2. 21

\* 2 Tim. 2. 25.

are censured this great sin: But take heed, bear not false witness against thy self, yea or against the truth of the promises, and of that *a* everlasting Covenant of grace made to thy soul, and *b* ratified in the *c* blood of Jesus Christ, whose blood speaketh *c* better things then the blood of *Abel*; *Abels* blood *d* cryed unto Heaven or vengeance, but the *e* blood of Christ for mercy: Know thou this, whosoever thou art that indeed fearest God in *g* simplicity of heart, so long as a man holds the way of righteousness in the course of his life, though (like the exorbitancy of a wheel, temptation may justle him out of the track) he have his steppings aside in particulars, yet hereof let him be secure, this sin he is not fallen into, for that implies an utter forsaking of the whole, \* way of righteousness: and generally so long as we keep in us the love of Gods truth, and of Gods Children, for truths sake, we are out of gunshot of this sin: yea, if God at any time \* give thee repentance for any sin which thou hast committed, conclude it not this great sin, which is unto death.

\* Lam. 3. 44.

And yet possibly, it may sometime so fall out (for as in Water face answereth to face, so the Heart of Man to Man, *Proverbs* 27. 19. and it hath been the case of divers others, even renowned Saints) I say it may sometimes befall a godly soul, what it did to *David*, and *Heman*; the one *Psal*: 77. 7. 8. 9. passionately bemoaning himself, and dolefully putting the question, (as speaking after his present sence.) *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah.* Compare *Psal*m: 38. and also *Psal*m the 6. and *Psal*m 32. 3, 4. and the other almost throughout the whole 88th *Psal*m complaineth of the \* clouds from

from heaven, yea of the very (f) thunder of Gods power and wrath ratling over him, and sensibly felt in his soule within him: O Lord God of my salvation, I have cryed Day and Night before thee, O encline thine eare unto my Cry, for my soule is full of troubles, thy wrath lyeth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves, Selah. Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: And againe, vers. 14. Lord, why castest thou off my soule? Why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted, and ready to dye from my youth up, while I suffer thy terrours, I am distracted: thy fierce wrath goeth over me, thy terrours have cut me off. Beloved, here under these mournfull expressions ye see what (g) blacknesse now was upon the perplexed spirits even of these great Saints of God, for the present time: and to the same effect is that of Hezekiah, Isa. 38. 14, 15. Like as a Crane or a swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as a Dove, mine eies faile with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me, and ease me, -- I shall goe softly all my years, in the bitterness of my soule. In like manner St. Paul of himselfe, 2 Cor. 7. 5. Wee were troubled on every side, without were fightings, within were feares. And this many times is very much occasioned by entring Comparisons of our owne state with others, on whom (as we think) h God shineth altogether, and so we entertain conceits, as if the Lord had clean cross'd us out of his Book, that he (i) regards us not at all; that he looketh upon others, but passeth by us like a (k) stranger, to whom we are not known: Then we think our owne case to be \* none such, when we take leisure to looke upon others, and comparing them with our selves, say their (l) Tables are furnished day by day, whilst earth and (m) ashes and teares are our bread; they (n) sing to the Lute, and to the Virole, and they see their children \* dance before them; and (as that not more learned, than devout Divine M. † (Hooker goes on, in flowrs of heavenly Rhetorick to set this out) our hearts are heavy in our bodies as

E

f Job 26. 14.

g Job 3. 5.  
Isa. 2. 6.

h Job 29. 3.  
Psal. 50. 2.  
i Job 30. 20.

k Jer. 14. 8.  
\* Lim. 1. 12.

l Psal. 23. 5.  
m Psal. 42. 3.  
n Amos 6. 5.

\* Psal. 17. 14.  
† Mr. Hooker, treat: of perpetuity of Faith in the Elect, p. 95.

lead,



o Psal. 6. 6.

p Job 29. 6.

Job 29. 3.

q Ps. 119. 83.

r Psal. 31. 12.

\* For my own part, I, in such a case of comparisons (which if in any, surely in spiritual things are if not odious, most discomfortable) I should advise a disconsolate soule, not to judg, or esteem his spiritual state by anothers measures, but by his own integrity, and soundness, and to consider himselfe not by the degrees of inherent sanctification by way of vigorous exercise, (which may be interrupted, *Mar. 4. 40.* in himself) but by the stability of Gods donation, or gift of that grace in it self, which is irrevocable, *Rom. 11. 29.* and then rest confident, that (as *Dr. Field* expresseth it (*L. 1. c. 7, 8.* of the Church) saving grace winneth infalibly, holdeth inseparably, and leadeth indeclinably, of which whosoever is partaker shall undoubtedly be saved.

the Lord most high there is an omnipotent power (r) an everlasting strength, and, *He is mighty to save, the (t) slowest to conceive a wrath, and readiest to forgive a sinne: Tam pater nemo, Tam pius nemo,* Tertul. Take the Apostles counsel, *Heb. 10. 32. 35.* Cast not therefore away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward; Chide down thy diffidence and distrustfull passions, and say, *Why art thou thus cast downe o my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall \* [yet] praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God,* Psal. 42. 11. & 43. 5. What? do not the promises be-

r Isa. 26. 4.

Isa. 63. 1.

r Psal. 103. 8.

\* ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι

ἐπαίπτεται,

Αἶν, yet there

is hope left

thee. St. John

the Apost'e

said it in the

*Ecclesiast. Hist.*

to a wild yong

man, *Ex. 10. 2.*

lead, our sighes beat as thick as a swift pulse, our tears (o) do wash the beds wherein we lye, whilst others wash in their paths in (p) butter, as *Job* saith: The Lords candle shineth faire upon their foreheads; wee are hanged up like (q) bottles in the smoak, cast into corners like the sherds of a broken pot: Tell not us of the promises of Gods favour, tell \* [such] as do reape the fruit of them, they belong not to us, they are made to others. Now Brethren, the Lord be mercifull to our weakness, but thus it is sometimes: But thou wilt now say unto me, what must my demeanour be under this sad distemper of my spirit, thus as  *Davids, Even overwhelmed within me,* Psal. 142. 3. Why, do thou as those very Saints of God (in the like condition before thee) did; review *Psal. 77. 10.* After the Prophets lamentation, upon his more advised thoughts, he said, it was his [infirmity] so to do, and then he called to remembrance the yeares of the right hand of the most High: The right hand is both the strongest, and with-

all the most ready to use, upon all occasions; so with

long

long to thee? a (r) servant? a (f) friend? yea, a (t) son, yet more, an heire, a joynt-heir with Jesus Christ himselfe? and by that means (u) encompassed with a guard of heavenly (w) Angels, even Angels of (x) might, and power to protect thee against all the powers of Hell, and darknesse? To whom but unto thee, who art a regenerate soule, doth that promise appertaine (y) *Heb. 13. 5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*; there are five Negatives in the Greek repeated, to assure Gods people, that he will never forsake them; it may be rendred according to the Greek (as one doth it) *I will not not leave thee, neither will I not not forsake thee*: Repetitions are no vaine Tautologies in holy Writ, they are used as *Pharaoh's* dreams were (z) doubled, to assure the Saints of the more certain confirmation of what the Spirit of truth hath spoken: To thee, I say belongeth that rich, and (a) precious, even honourable promise of Almighty God; alas! alas! 'tis not for swine to expect such pearls to be cast away upon them, *Matth. 7. 6*. This is a teat of comfort onely for the Child to sucke, even to (b) suck out and be satisfied, as from the breasts of Consolation; this is not meate for every mouth, but a chosen moysture provided for Gods Inheritance only; this is Wine of Gods owne Cellar, layd up for his Spouse alone, that is, for the devout soule dedicated unto Gods service: Wherefore lift up the hands w<sup>ch</sup> hang downe, and the feeble knees, *Heb. 12. 12*. O take heed of that ugly sin, of all others the most odious, and black in the eyes of that God whose glorious grace (c) superaboundeth over mans sin, I meane that monstrous sinne of Despair, by which *Judas* the Traytor sinned more (saith an ancient Father) than by betraying his Lord, and Master Christ; and therefore was it that *S. Austin* gave the lye to *Cain*, when under the guilt of his awakened conscience he cryed out, *Gen. 4. 13. My sinne is greater then can be borne*, *Mentiris Cain*, saith that devout Father,

E 2

who

r Psal. 116. 16.  
Num. 12. 7,  
8. f Jam. 2.  
23. Joh 15. 14,  
15. f Rom. 8.  
14. f 7. Heb.  
12. 7. u Psal.  
34 7. Cant. 6.  
8. w Heb. 1.  
14. x Psalm.  
103. 20. & 2  
Thes. 1. 7.  
y & μή σε ἀΐσω  
ἐδός & μή σε  
ἐγκαταλίπω.  
z Gen. 41. 32.

a 2 Pet. 1. 4.

b Isa. 66. 11.

c Rom. 5. 20.

who himselfe, by his own Confessions (after the extravagancies of a vaine youth, wherein he followed too much the <sup>(d)</sup> sight of his eyes, experimented the sweetnesse of those overflowing mercies, which do so much <sup>(e)</sup> rejoyce, and triumph, as it were, above judgment; Mercy flowing from the God and <sup>(f)</sup> Father of all comfort as water doth from a Spring or Fountaine most genuinely, and freely; but Justice comes forth as liquor from the Wine-presse, when the grapes are squeezed, and after a sort \* wrung out from him hardly; God doth not afflict willingly [*delipps*] or, from his heart, nor grieve the children of men, Lam. 3. 33. There was never any man perished for want of mercy in God, but for want of his owne repentance in himselfe; as it was a sin in the Israelites to limit Gods power, *Psal. 78. 41.* so is it also to limit his mercy; What sin can be imagined or committed too great for God to pardon? Wherefore, once again let me exhort thee; Crush that Cockatrice of Despaire in the very first <sup>(g)</sup> Eggs thereof, and dash that Babylonish brat in <sup>(h)</sup> infancy. Beloved, \* Desperation is a kind of ~~weak~~ or affection growing out of the sense of sin and wrath, it is *malum arduum instans, & ineluctabile*, as one stileth it, and ordinarily it proceedeth from the misjudging of Gods affection, and good will towards men, the soule conceives of him, as of one that hath utterly cast off all care, or respect towards it; whereas *the LORD himselfe is thy keeper, the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand, Psal. 121. 4, 5.* and hath commanded thee to commit the keeping of thy soule to him, in well-doing, as unto a faithfull Creator, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* And by so doing, we have all a sure promise, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* To be kept by the power of God, through faith and salvation, *A salvo conservantis conductu, non à vacillante conservati progressu*: as an Orthodox <sup>(i)</sup> Divine glosseth those words; *We are kept by the saving guidance of God the Keeper, n d not left to the wavering unsteady progresse of*

<sup>d</sup> Eccl. 11. 9.<sup>e</sup> Jam. 2. 13.<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 3.

\* Gen. 40. 11.

<sup>g</sup> Isa. 59. 5.<sup>h</sup> Psal. 137. 9.\* Desperation  
what it is.<sup>i</sup> Dr. Prid.  
Lect. 6. Sect.  
2.



our selves, who are kept by him. What shall I say more? sooner (saith a reverend <sup>k</sup> Divine) shall God forgive the Apostacy of the Reprobate, lapsed, and damned Angels, then this damned sinne of Desperation: Give me leave among many (that I may contract this Discourse) to present to you one Meane, or Remedie to prevent, or else to remove this evill; Which evill, if given way unto (through the inveterate malice, and envy of the Devill) it may like that <sup>1</sup> worm in *Jonah's* Gourd in a night, eate out all the very sap, and life of divine comfort: the Mean is this, Diligent and prudent observation of Gods dealing w<sup>th</sup> others of his servants sinning though grievously in particulars; and withall of our owne personall <sup>\*</sup> experiences that (in former times) we our selves have had of Gods goodness in our own souls; <sup>m</sup> Experience is the nurse of Hope; *Per ea, quae agnoscas praestita, discas sperare promissa*, by those things which you have known performed, learn to hope for those things which are promised; to which meditation let us also joyne the serious consideration of that glorious Attribute in God, his <sup>\*</sup> Immutability and unchangeableness, *Mal. 3. 6. Jam. 1. 17.* and that in respect both of his power and goodnesse: make this reckoning, that the Benefits which he hath bestowed, are (saith judicious *Hooker*) as it were bills obligatory, and sufficient Sureties, that he will bestow <sup>n</sup> further; Neither is his hand <sup>o</sup> shortned, or his good will, no nor doth he faile to [remember] his Covenant of love made with Believers, *Psal. 111. 5. The Lord*, saith the Apostle, *is not unrighteous to forget*, *Heb. 6. 10.* As his hand is not shortned, so neither his arme weakned, that it cannot save as it hath done; *Hee is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever to his chosen*, *Heb. 13. 8.* His past, or present mercy is still a warrant of his future love, because *whom he loveth, he loveth unto the end*, *John 13. 1.* Understand it *amore benevolentiae*, with the love of benevolence; though not *amore beneficentiae*, in regard

<sup>\*</sup> Bishop King  
Lect. 26. on  
*Jon.*

<sup>1</sup> Iona 4. 7.

A remedy against despair.

<sup>\*</sup> *Psal. 77. 10,*  
<sup>11.</sup>

*Heb. 10. 32.*

<sup>m</sup> *Rom. 5. 4.*

<sup>\*</sup> If a man have received true assurance of Gods favour, though but once in all his life: yet by that one signe, he may assure himself of his salvation, upon this ground, *John 13. 1.* that Gods love is unchangeable, though ever after we live in temptation, *Perk. on Mat. 7. 23.*  
<sup>n</sup> *Mat. 25. 29.*  
<sup>o</sup> *Num. 11. 23*  
*Isa. 50. 2. & 59. 1.*

gard of the manifestation of aſtural benifcence he withdraw for a time his hand.

And that I may ſhorten the way, by Examples, which ſeemeth often too long, by Precept; I ſhall offer two, and thoſe moſt notorious to your conſideration: One is of Peter the Apoſtle, and the other of Mary Magdalene, out of whom it's ſaid that the Lord had caſt no leſſe then ſeven devils: Goe, ſaith the Angel, *Mar. 16. 7.* to the woman, who came to ſee the Sepulchre wherein Chriſt was laid; Goe your way, tell his Diſciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee, there ſhall yee ſee him, namely, after his Reſurrection. Why is Peter here mentioned by name more, or rather than any of all the other Diſciples or Apoſtles? ſurely it was a ſpecial dignation, and act of grace in Chriſt, to ſingle him out by his name; as is observable in God toward his favourite Jacob, *Iſa. 43. 1.* Feare not, o Jacob, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy [Name] thou art mine: Now Baronius and the Fry of the Roman Catholics, from this priority of Order wherein S. Peter was now preferred, in a perſonall nomination, would coyne an argument for the œcumenical, univerſal ſupremacy of the Pope, as the alone viſible Monarch of the whole catholike Church diſſeminate all the world over, uſurping withall an uncontroulable juřiſdiction over all powers and conſciences, by pretending to a perſonall ſucceſſion of Peter in the Sea of Rome, although indeed he reſemble him in nothing rightly, but in the p denial of his Maſter: But away with thoſe parasites of that \* man of ſinne, and leaving thoſe bladders of Antichriſtian haughtineſſe and pride, to be cruſhed by the feet of that ſupream head of his Church, q who is now haſtning to the r Judgement of the great Whore; Amen, even ſo ſ come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly: O how would it joy thy Saints to ſee her lye in the (t) duſt. I wiſ, there is other honey which the believing Bees may ſuck from the ſweet flower of this example

p Mat. 26. 70.

\* 2 Theſ. 2. 3.

q Ephes. 1. 22.

r Rev. 17. 1.

ſ Rev. 22. 20.

t Pſal. 7. 5.

ample of Peter, who had the honour, and happinesse to be thus saluted, before others, after his Saviours Resurrection: *Goe and tell Peter!* Would any one have thought Peter in a capacity of regard from Christ, whom against a solemn <sup>u</sup> protestation to the contrary he had denyed, and abjured, even then too, when his fidelity to his Lord and Master should specially have appeared in the time of his ignominy, and reproachful usage by his cruell Judges: Yes, my deare Brethren, *ob hoc ipsum, quia gravius deliquit*, as *Granatensis*, with sundry others, observeth, for this very cause, for that he had more grievously fallen, yet having <sup>w</sup> wept bitterly after that fall, and repented for it; hence it was, that upon that planck of Repentance, after so dangerous a falling, he swam safe againe to the shoar of favour, and was received to mercy: The like meditation also may arise out of the ninth verse, from the instance of *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom he had cast seven devills, and yet *ἐπείτη πρῶτον μὲν Μαργαρίτη*, hee appeared to this very *Mary*, and that (which much heightens the Emphasis) to her too [first] before to any other, yea before he appeared, for ought we read in Scripture, to *Mary* his Virgin Mother; First, to a woman, that as a woman had been <sup>x</sup> first in the transgression, so should she be the first who partook in the manifestation of the compleat Redemption; when our Saviour by his rising from the dead gave an <sup>y</sup> assured evidence, and an infallible proof, that all the debt which was due to Gods Justice for the sins of Believers was now fully discharged, in that Christ their surety, who undertooke to satisfie, was acquitted from the prison of the Grave, the payns of death being loosed, because it was not possible that we should be holden of it, *Act 2. 24.* Look then, as the woman that was made of a man, brought in sin, and death, so the man that was made of a woman, brought in righteousness and life:

But

<sup>u</sup> Mat. 26.33.  
35.

<sup>w</sup> Mat. 26.75.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Tim. 2.14.

<sup>y</sup> Acts 17.31.



But was it not strange, that our Saviour should above all other women in the world, shew himselfe, and all this favour to *Mary Magdalene*, one who had been such a loathsome sinke of uncleannesse, that seven devills, or a multitude of heynous crimes possessed her whole selfe, as if she had lyen down wholly under the full power and dominion of all, or most of the devills in Hell; Yet, first, to *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom hee had cast seven devills: Surely this was done, saith *Janfenius*, and with him many Divines, *In consolationem pœnitentium*, to be for the infinite comfort of poor Penitents; as *Mary Magdalene* had curled (probably) and crisped her frizled locks for wanton dalliance, and lustfulnesse, so being forgiven much upon her Repentance, she testified her love to that Saviour who had pardoned her, by <sup>z</sup> wiping his feet with the hair of her head, and washing them with her teares, cleansing those unchast, and adulterous <sup>a</sup> windowes, by which Death had entred, and so often endangered her soule to damnation: So true is that sweet meditation of St. <sup>b</sup> *Cyprian*, upon the gracious act of Christ in pardoning the penitent Thief on the Grosse, about his last expiration, *quecunq; necessitas cogat ad pœnitundinem, Nec quantitas Criminis, nec brevitās temporis nec vitæ enormitas, nec Horæ extremitas, (si vera contritio, si pura fuerit voluptatum mutatio) excludit a venia*; That is, neither the greatnesse of the Crime, nor the enormity of the life, nor the extremity of the last howre, provided that Cordiall, and serious Repentance seasonably intervene, and come in between sin and judgment, none of all these doe exclude from favour, and mercy from a gracious God, who so often <sup>\*</sup> prevents a sinner with the offers of attonement; when a poor penitent seems to be as it were, at a losse in a kind of wildernesse, then sounds the horn of salvation for his returne to God, who embraceth him returning, returning (I say) yea, though it be after a long <sup>\*</sup> wandring out of the wayes of

<sup>z</sup> Luk. 7. 38.

<sup>a</sup> Ier. 9. 21.

<sup>b</sup> S. Cyprian,  
De Cana Do-  
mini, Sect. 16.

<sup>\*</sup> Rom. 10. 20.  
Psal. 21. 3.

<sup>\*</sup> Psal. 56. 8.

of righteousness; to which purpose is that we read of in the Canticles, *Cant: 6. 13. Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return*; every sin is an aversion, or a turning from the Creator to the creature; but every act of repentance is a \* returning of the sinner from the creature unto the Creator back again; so here *Quater dicit Revertere*, saith St. Bernard, He repeats this returning to the Shulamite four times together; as if he had said, Return from the original sin of thy Nature, return from the actual sins of thy life, return from thy sins of custome, and return also from thy scarlet, and from thy crimson, and thine enormous transgressions; *Quis non stupeat charitatem Dei specti, & revocantis?* as the same Father; O admirable love, every finger of Christ drops myrrhe, and healing in this passage, in this one single instance it shews it self in all its dimensions, in the breadth, and length, and depth, & height thereof, as St. Paul expresseth it, *Ephes. 3. 18.* Who is not even stupified under the apprehension, and manifestation of so transcendent indulgence of the Lord from heaven to a miserable, wretched, relapsed sinner, who being offered love refuseth, yea & despoiseth it, and yet such, and so great is the Lords *εὐδοκία*, his free *b* love to mankind, that though they go astray like sheep from the fold, where they might be safe, wandring amidst *d* wolves, by which they are in danger to be torn; yet, he *e* recalls them back again unto himself in much love; and *f* if they will, though after a long expectation, and patience, but return at last to the *g* Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; lo, he is ready to meet them in kindness, who meet him in righteousness, *Isa 64. 5.* Yea, as Calvin observes upon the carriage of the Father towards the repentant prodigal son returning, *Redeuntem eminus agnoscit, atq; eo vis uinis amplectitur*, *Luk. 15. 20.* when his son was yet a great way off, and had but *b* purposed as it were in his heart to arise, and go back to his Father (for I

\* Mal. 3. 7.

*a* Jer. 23. 17.  
Act. 13. 41.

*b* Tit. 3. 4.

*c* Psal. 119.  
176.

*i* Pet. 2. 25.

*d* Mat. 10. 16.

*e* Pro. 1. 24.

*f* Jer. 4. 1.

*g* i Pet. 2. 25.

i Athanasius,  
qu. 78. rom. 2.  
pag: 296.  
k Mat. 3.8.

understand this parable of one who had been already formerly in communion with the Church ) his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him in all the postures of love embracing, welcoming, entertaining of him, and rejoycing in his return home: *ἐκ ἑστὶν ἀμαρτίας ἀσυγχώρητος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ ἐν τοῖς ὁσίοις, καὶ καὶ ἀξίαν μετανοήσας*, as most sweetly i Athanasius, to the same effect, No sin is irremissible, and unpardonable to any soul, that in an holy manner repenteth, and brings forth fruit k meet for repentance; not to him who blasphemeth simply, *ἡγὼ τὸ ἐν τῇ βλασφημίᾳ ἐμπέσοιμι*, as the same Father hath it, but, unto him who abideth, and continueth under that sin, without remorse impenitently is forgiveness denied, who so finally persists under such a state, he it is, who sinneth unto death.

Well, I perceive is time to end, and I doubt lest I weary your patience; and yet I have one word more to \* drop for comfort to a regenerate soul, which is like to that wine made by Christ at the marriage Feast at *Cana of Galilee*, perhaps the \* good kept til last. And that word is his, which I wish imprinted even in characters of gold, indeleibly upon the hearts of every true *Nathaniel*, and *Isralite* \* indeed: This is that I would say, this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, (so explained as ye have now heard it) this sin, which is thus said to be unto death? this sin I say is not incident at all into any one, whosoever is elect, and born of God, and so consequently to such an one, there is no danger of final condemnation: *Rom: 8. 1.* Because their sins though deadly in their own nature, yet are not so in the event to them.

I confess: that for divers good ends, that the \* God of all grace intendeth thereby, the choicest of Gods own People are sometimes under great distresses, shut up as it were ἐν τῇ στενοχωρίᾳ, in a \* straight place, out of which they see not how to come forth; and how.

\* Dent. 32.2.

\* Joh. 2.10.

\* Joh. 1.47.

\* 1 Pet. 5.10.

\* Psal. 118.5.

\* Psal. 98.8.



howsoever the Lord will in the event, cause all to work together for their spirituall good; yet whilst the serenity of Gods countenance is clouded as to them, whether for their *b* triall, or else for the \* chastning of some particular Delinquency, or for the \* quickning of graces languishing, or other like end, which in his infinite wisdom he aimeth at; I say, during that state, miserable are the perplexities wherewith they are surprized; but especially if the \* soul be also sore vexed under some present apprehension of wrath by reason of some sin committed against knowledg, and conscience, then that wounded spirit who can bear? saith Solomon; Prov. 18. 14. alas none, iniquities charged [there] are too \* heavy to be born; in such a case, all outward comforts are but as the \* cracklings of thorns under a pot, without solid heat, or any lasting light: A Crown of Gold, though deckt with all the orient rubies of the highest value, cannot cure an aking head, nor a velvet slipper ease the torments of the gowt, nor any thing that is \* before them, or about them minister any joy, or refreshing to them; And no marvel, because there are in this evill of a perplexed conscience, two things eminent above all others, which make it intollerable, a wound not to be born; one is this, that whereas in all other afflictions man hath to do with man, or at the worst with devils, in this he hath immediatly to deal with God himself: \* polluted man with an \* all pure God, sinfull man with an \* holy God, offending man \* with an angry God, who is in his wrath a consuming fire; O the inexpressable agonies of a \* desolate soul, afflicted for the absence of Gods smiles, tormented for the present sence of his frowns for sin! When God himself writes bitter things against a soul, the fvenome of his arrows must needs drink up the very spirit within him. *Quid prodest non habere consciunt; habenti conscientiam?* saith *g* Lactantius, there needs no other testimony, where God himself is a *h* wit-

*a* Rom. 8. 28.

2 Chron. 32.

31.

*b* 1 Pet. 1. 7.

zech. 13. 9.

*c* Job 5. 17.

*d* 1 Cor. 11. 30  
for this cause.

*e* Hof 5. 15.

\* Psal. 6. 3.

\* Psal. 38. 4.

\* Psal. 58. 9.

\* Eccl. 9. 1.

*a* Job 25. 4.

Pro. 20. 9.

*b* Hab. 1. 13.

*c* Josh. 24. 19.

*d* Psal. 7. 11.

and 76. 7.

*e* Heb. 12. 29.

*f* Psal. 143. 4.

*g* Job 13. 26.

Pro. 14. 10.

*h* Job 6. 4.

*i* Lactant. 1. 6.

*c.* 24.

*k* Rom. 1. 9.

nes, and if the heart, that is the conscience, condemn a man, God is greater than the heart, and knoweth all things, and will surely much more condemn him, being guilty: 1 *Job*: 3. 20, 21. Now who (affected with the consideration of his dreadfull Majesty) can stand before God immediatly, when he is angry, and rebuke a man for sin? What can that which is but finite do, in dealing with him who is infinite? where is no proportion. Secondly, whereas in other evils, a man is still a friend to himself, in this case, he becomes a scourge, a magor-missabib, a fear round about, like *Pashur*, a terror to himself. *Jer*: 20. 4. and whatsoever is in him, all conspires against him, understanding memory all: guilt in the conscience is an importunate evil, and still vexeth as a *Midianite* was vexed, even as a thing that is raw restlessly: nor can we baffle, or put it off, as *Felix* did Saint *Paul*, who touched him to the quick, saying, go thy way for this time, and when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee; or if as those that offered their Children to *Molech* in fire, were wont with Drums to drown the noise, and screeches of their little ones, in the valley of *Hinnom*, we think to silence it, its all in vain: Conscience under the conviction of sin, and unpacified, its an ill companion in company, it dasheth all thy pleasures, q defileth all thy devotions. embitters all thy comforts, but a worse when alone, Wherefore a soul that is in such a case, (during the continuance of the same) it sits like a \*Pelican in the Wilderness, r desolate distressed, s perplexed.

But yet my dear Brethren, cast not away your confidence, but live as the just man doth, that is, ought to do. By faith, one grain of living, vigorous faith may remove a Mountain of sin into the Sea of forgetfulness, which faith, saith the great Apostle, is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, *Heb*: 11. 1. ἡ πίστις ὁμοίωσις τῶν ἀόρατων, the meaning is, that faith doth after a sort give being, and a subsistence in the soul

i *Exod.* 34. 7.  
k *Psal.* 90. 7, 8.  
l *Psal.* 76. 7.

\* *Nam* 25. 17.  
2 *Chro.* 15. 6.

\* *Act.* 24. 25.

n *Jer.* 32. 35.

o *Joh.* 8. 9.

p *Pro.* 14. 13.  
q *Tit.* 1. 15.

\* *Psal.* 102. 6.  
r 2 *Cor.* 4. 8.  
s *Psal.* 143. 4.  
t *Heb.* 10. 35.  
u *Heb.* 10. 38.

soul to those things, which being true in the promise of God, but yet not actually enjoyed, only are expected, and hoped for: And in this sad case, dwell seriously upon the meditation of the promises which have all their yea, and amen; their full ratification in the blood of Christ, the blood of the Covenant. Now look what is the promise? see (as seasonable to this thy present sad condition) *Matt: 5. 4. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Psal: 85. 8. God the Lord he will speak \* peace unto his people, and to his Saints;* provided they demean themselves as Saints, viz: that after peace spoken to them repenting for their folly, they do not again return to the same folly, see *Hos: 2. 14. Isa. 40. 1. 2.* When God speaks peace, his very speaking is performing: *Hath the Lord spoken, and shall not he do it? even Jehu could acknowledg so much.* (being convinced of iein a particular proof thereof, & know now faith he, there shall fall unto the earth, nothing of the Lord which the Lord hath spoken, I but thou wilt say, I feel no such thing as peace spoken to my soul? suppose not in present sence, yet it is most firm, and sure in the promise of God; now live by faith, by beleeving thou layest a foundation; (so as some render, and expound the word *in scutis*) upon which to build the certain expectation of the promise, the more visible things are, and obvious, or present to the sence, the weaker is the faith, for the excellency thereof is when it rests upon the naked word, and authority of God the promiser; which was exemplified in *Job. Chap: 13. 15 Though the Lord kill me (saith he) yet will I trust in him,* and in *Abraham* know that Gods power was perfected in the truth, though weakness of his servants faith, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* he stood not poring upon the weakness, or unlikelyhood of second causes to produce, or accomplish an issue, when both him self and his Wife were, through natures debility, past all expectation of a Son, but he still looked upon the stedfastnes of the promise, for the truth, and word sake

of

z *Heb. 10. 29.*  
\* Note here, that Trouble of Conscience is a good preparative to peace of Conscience (when sanctified) & indeed the solid true peace is brought out of former trouble *Isa. 61. 1.*  
*Matt. 11. 28.*  
See Dr. Scater Sermon: *Sick soul salved.*  
a *Albertus Novicamp. in scopo Biblico, Annot. de Fide. Gerar. tom. 3. s. 75.*  
*tract. De Justif. per Fidem.*  
\* We read *Zech. 9. 12.* that the prisoners of hope were wished to turn to the strong hold, and yet, at that time, there was hardly any strong hold, after the Captivity, to turn to: to imply, that God was then the strongest aid, when humane helps afforded the weakest, and most improbable succour, and then was the most proper season for faith and hope to exercise their acts on warrantable grounds.



\* Bonadventur:  
Dist: 23. qu: 5.  
l: 3. & Joh:  
Altenstaig. in  
Lexic. Theolog.  
y: 61. in verbo  
Argumentum,  
& pag: ib. 316  
327.  
\* Matt. 7. 27.

d Pro. 28. 13.  
e 1 Joh. 1. 9.  
f Act. 11. 23.

g 2 Cor. 7. 10.  
h Psal. 51. 4.

i Joh. 12. 40.  
2 Cor. 4. 4.  
k Rom. 2. 5.  
Heb. 6. 6.

of the most faithfull promiser, and so obtained the thing promised. Rom: 4. 19. 20. 21. Faith made the Son as it were actually present to *Abraham*, as if he had enjoyed him before he was born, or begotten; for which cause its added also, that its *ἔργον*, an evidence, that is, as the word exactly imports, a convincing demonstration in the soul of the certain truth of what is promised; its translated by *b* some, *argumentum*, the argument of things not seen, for that it serveth so convincingly, to enlighten the mind, and to give assent to what is promised, as firmly as a true argument, by strength of reasoning, occasions an assent to the conclusion proved by it: Moreover, in case of doubting, which Sathan raising storms and tempests in the soul, may occasion, then God hath provided, and given us an Anchor both sure and stedfast: Heb: 6. 19. that however we may be tossed by temptation, yet our ship shall not be broken by the Waves, or split against the Rocks.

So then hast thou sinned? *d* confesse and forsake it, and God is righteous to *e* forgive it, canst thou confesse it? and hast thou a full *f* purpose of heart to leave it, and to cleave unto the Lord? then be assured of this, thou hast not committed the sin; yea the very discovery within thy self of thy sin, and the *g* sorrow of heart thou conceivest for it, upon this ground, that *h* God is offended by it, more than for any fear of punishment, hating sin for sins sake, I say, this very discovery (corruption not being discovered by it self, but by grace, as the Sun is not seen but by its own light) is a sign that thou art not under the guilt of the sin against the Holy Ghost, for that sin carries with it so deep an infatuation of *i* mind, and judgment, and withall so grosse stupefaction of conscience, that the heart *i* cannot repent, nor apprehend pardon. And to this purpose it is good for a soul distressed to select such Texts of Scripture, as are most seasonable for its own present state, and with

all

all to consider those titles, or that stile which God is pleased to give himself, in relation to such a state of soul in his Children; thus he is called Rom. 15. 13. *The God of hope, now, the God of hope, (saith the Apostle) fill you with all joy, and peace in beleeving, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost, so also 2 Cor. 1. 3 He is stiled the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort: confer 2 Thes: 2. 16. 17. It is a Christians prudence to meditate likewise the tender regard he hath to the condition, and temper, k and frame of his Sons and Daughters under temptation, God hateth nothing that he hath made, not a sparrow, Matt: 10. 29. not an Ox: 1 Cor: 9. 9. much lesse man who is veriuallly all creatures: Mar: 16. 15. see Tit: 3. 4. read 1 Cor: 10. 13. There bath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, [1 Moderate, and not above mans nature to undergo] But God is faithfull, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, and if we beleeve not, yet he abideth faithfull, he cannot deny himself. 2 Tim: 2. 13. and again let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithfull that promised, and 1 that of John. 1 Job: 2. 1, 2. never be out of mind: My little Children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not: and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: & not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world: compare Mat: 9. 13. 1 Tim: 1. 16. Heb: 10. 23. Beloved Christians, there is a kind of wisdom and prudence in believing; thus conceive it. It is when a man fits the consideration of the attributes, and actions of God to the particular most necessary, and fit for faith to respect, according to severall occasions: would they humble themselves for their sins? they then consider God as terrible, and dreadfull in his judgments? would they raise up themselves with comfort? they consider him as a God that keepeth promise: would*

\* Psal. 103. 14

\* Rom. 4.21.  
Eph. 3.20.

\* Dr. *Salter*  
my Father in  
his Comment  
on the *Rom.*  
cap. 4. pag. 184.  
published by  
me, 1650.

\* Matt. 11.28.

• Mic. 7.18.

p See Exod.

34.6.

q Exod. 20.6.

r Psal. 136.1,

&c.

s Psal. 38.4.

t Psal. 10.5.

Eccles. 5.8.

Pro. 19.29.

v Psal. 145.9.

& Psal. 36.5.

w Psal. 98.2,3.

would they stablish hope in expectation of things passing the course of Nature? they consider his endless power, able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think: there is a confused apprehension of the Deity (saith a Reverend\* Divine) for the most part liveles and ineff. tuall; when men in grosse only, and indistinctly meditate the Divine nature, without reference to particulars, concerning the present occasion: And another as preposterous, and unseasonable; and no lesse uncomfortable; when men fix their faith with meditation of that, that is most unseasonable, for their present state; God is mercifull saith the Presumer, He is just saith the desperate distressed; Both true, he is just and mercifull saith the Psalmist. But should not faith in wisdom contemplate what is fittest for the present necessity? this wisdom pray we for.

Dear Brethren, me thinks I would gladly (having travelled so much in this question, for my own satisfaction, as well as yours) give \* ease to every weary soul, labouring under any perplexity, in this regard: But be sure thou do, by al means, shun that grievous sin of despair, denying unto God the truth of his promise, and mercy, those two sweet attributes, wherein he doth much delight to & glory; his Justice in the visitation of sinners reacheth to the third, or fourth Generation; But his mercy is extended unto 7 thousands, and endureth, for ever; there is observeable an holy writ, a three fold *super* or [over] first, our sins are [s over] our heads, as an heavy, if not too heavy a burthen; then, Gods Judgments are [t over] those sins; But his mercies are [v over] all theise: over our sins repented of to pardon them, over his Judgments to remove them; and over our Bodies, and Souls, through the blood of our Lord Jesus, everlastingly to save w them: Take heed, desperation is of that haynous nature, that scarcely any particular sin more dishonors God, I am sure none more disquiets the soul; it often ariseth from ignorance, or mis



misprision of the promises of God; that, notwithstanding Gods exemplary dealings with other of his dearest Saints (whereof I gave some intimation before) delivering them, even above their hope, out of how great perplexities, and (as to themselves they seemed) even inextricable dangers and discomforts; Besides some personall experiences, which St. <sup>x</sup> Paul was wont to stay, and to support himselfe by, under the expectation of future mercies; I say, notwithstanding all this, men often mistake the promises of God, sometimes strenghtning them to themselves, and making them more narrow then indeed they are; presumption makes them over-wide, but despair too narrow; but especially when they rest too much and stick in the Duties required of them, as though the worke done did deserve of God, or as if they were all exacted in the performance, after the rigour of the Law, which condemns every y interruption, or but <sup>z</sup> circumstantiall breach, and defect; whereas indeed, they are <sup>a</sup> not under the law, but under grace, and the mitigation of the Gospel, through Christ the Mediator, Rom. 6. 14.

In a word, stablish thy Hope by these 3. Considerations, which <sup>b</sup> Albertus Novic. hath offered to us. 1. *Veritate promissionis*, by the <sup>c</sup> truth of the promise: Let God be true, & every man [comparatively] a lyar, Ro. 3. 4. He remaineth faithful, 2 Tim. 2. 13. His covenant cannot fail, for it's everlasting, Jer. 37. 40. And of this Covenant He is likewise mindfull, Psal. 111. 5. Yea, when wee, under our *Deliquiums*, and as it were, inward swoonings of spirit, are apt to think He hath <sup>d</sup> forgotten to be gracious, and hath in anger shut up his tender mercies; yet, even then, he keepeth us in his mind; and, as the sweet Singer of Israel acquaints us from experience, He [remembreth] us, even in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever, Psal. 136. 23. Only take heed of <sup>e</sup> limiting the Lord to thine owne <sup>f</sup> time, He waiteth

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to

<sup>x</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 10.  
<sup>z</sup> 2 Tim. 4. 18.

<sup>y</sup> Gal. 3. 10.  
<sup>z</sup> Jam. 2. 10.  
<sup>a</sup> Rom. 6. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Albertus Novic. ubi  
supra, tract. de  
spe.  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 18.  
Psal. 93. 3.

<sup>d</sup> Psal. 77. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Psal. 78. 41.

<sup>f</sup> Act. 1. 7.  
1 Thess. 5. 1.

<sup>s</sup> see Psal. 27.  
 14. Mic. 7.  
 7, 8. Jer.  
 14. 22.  
<sup>h</sup> Acts 1. 7.  
 see Hab. 2. 3.

to be gracious, but in his own season; therefore in this regard, *He that believeth*, saith that Evangelicall Prophet, *Isa. 28. 16. shall not make hast: If God hath long waited for us, shall not we wait upon God?* for though he tarry long [namely, as to thine owne apprehension] yet, when his own season (which he only knows<sup>h</sup> when it is best) is come, then is *He a very present helpe in trouble*, *Isa. 46. 13. Psal. 46. 1. And when he doth come indeed, he makes a large amends for his stay by doubling his comforts, Isa. 54. 7, 8. And if we receive the witnesse of men, surely the witnesse of God is greater, Psal. 19. 7. 1 John. 5. 9, 10. Wherefore, be confident of his Truth; onely ye have need of patience a while, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise; For yet a little, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry, Heb. 10. 36, 37. The occasion of fainting in this regard, is defect in faith: I had fainted, saith David, unlesse I had believed to see the goodnesse of the Lord in the land of the living, Psal. 27. 13.*

<sup>i</sup> Rom. 4. 21.

The second thing to stablish Hope by is, *poteestate redditionis*, by the <sup>i</sup> power of God actually exhibiting, and making good the promise; *With God*, saith Gabriel the Angel (whose name signifieth the strength of the mighty God) *nothing shall be impossible*, *Luk. 1. 37. Indeed whatsoever imports matter of impotency, and weakness, or what is repugnant, and contrary to the nature of his omnipotency, this God cannot doe, as to lye, to deny himselfe, both these are impossible to God, Heb. 6. 18. Tit. 1. 2. and 2 Tim. 2. 13. Looke then what God hath promised, the same saith Abraham from a rare experience, and proof of his power, He is [able] also to performe, Rom. 4. 21. Be ye therefore strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering, with joyfulness, Col. 1.*

11.

3<sup>ly</sup>. And lastly, Hope is corroborate, and receiveth strength

strength, *charitate adoptionis*, by the consideration of the divine love of Adoption. Behold, saith that very Disciple whom Christ <sup>k</sup> loved, & who had his very bosome, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *sonnes of God*, <sup>1</sup> Job. 3. 1. Rom. 8. 15. *Tee have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but yee have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, father*, compare Gal. 4. 5, 6. And now, my dear brethren, sith, from being by nature Children of wrath, Eph. 2. 3. Enemies to God, Rom. 5. 10. Captives of Satan, <sup>2</sup> Tim. 2. 26. We are under a state of divine love, wee are in the hands of a dear Father, even as <sup>1</sup> dear children, and that He spareth us as a <sup>m</sup> father doth the son that serveth him, <sup>n</sup> passing by, & <sup>o</sup> hiding his face from many transgressions, which of <sup>p</sup> infirmity, or <sup>q</sup> passion we may sometimes be overtaken in; Give we thanks to his Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darknesse, and hath translated us into the kingdome of his deare sonne: In whom wee have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sinns, Col. 1. 12, 13, 14. Having then these <sup>r</sup> promises, dearly beloved, and sharing in such priviledges as these are, I cannot but say with that Orthodox Father, S. Austin, *Erigit ergo, se humana fragilitas, & non desperet, non se collidat, non se vertat, non dicat, non erò, &c.* Let humane frailty stirre up it selfe, and not be <sup>t</sup> cast downe with despair, let it not break it selfe, or dash upon that dangerous conclusion of [ *I shall not be* ] namely, in favour againe with God: What? never in favour? not a dearly beloved Son with a dearly loving Father? Consider, what is it that God hath promised thee? O thou mortall man, is it not <sup>u</sup> life eternall? is it not that thou (believing) shouldst be <sup>w</sup> where Christ the <sup>x</sup> First-borne himselfe is? O believe, believe, *plus est quod jam fecit, quam quod promisit*, loe, saith <sup>y</sup> Austin, he hath actually already done more (after a sort) than what he

\* John 13. 23.

<sup>1</sup> Ephes. 5. 1.

<sup>m</sup> Mal. 3. 17.

Psal. 103. 13.

<sup>n</sup> Mic. 7. 18.

<sup>o</sup> Psal. 51. 1.

<sup>p</sup> Psal. 77. 10.

Gal. 6. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Psal. 116. 2.

11.

<sup>r</sup> 2 Cor. 7. 1.

<sup>s</sup> S. August. on  
Psal. 148.

<sup>t</sup> Psal. 42. 11.

<sup>u</sup> Joh 3. 16.

<sup>w</sup> Joh. 17. 24.

<sup>x</sup> Rom. 8. 29.

Col. 1. 15. 18.

and 1. 6.

<sup>y</sup> S. August. l.

13 de Trin. c.

16.

hath



<sup>z</sup> Phil. 2. 8.

<sup>a</sup> Acts 20. 28.

hath promised : Why, what hath God done ? He hath  
<sup>z</sup> dyed for thee : and what hath he promised ? that  
 thou shalt live with him : *Incredibilis est, quod mortuus  
 est eternus, quam ut in eternum vivat mortalis*, as the same  
 Father ; It is more incredible, that He who is eternall  
 ( though not as eternall ) should become mortall,  
 than that He who is in his nature mortall, should be-  
 come eternall, to wit, in a state of glory : Now the  
 first of these wee believe, namely, that he who was  
 God <sup>a</sup> shed his blood, and dyed ; why, then believe  
 that God, *who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-  
 with he loved us, even when we were dead in sinnes, hath  
 quickned us together with Christ ( by grace ye are saved )  
 and hath raised us up together, and made us ( in promise,  
 in hope, and expectation ) sit together in heavenly places  
 in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6.

But why am I thus tedious, and over-long ? How  
 canst thou, under all these soule-chearing expressions,  
 be still dejected : consider God the Father, who pro-  
 miseth life unto thee, hath stiled himselfe *The God of  
 Consolation*, Rom. 15. 5. *Tea of ( all ) comfort*, who  
 comforteth his Saints in all their tribulations, 2 Cor.  
 1. 4. And when they are cast down, 2 Cor. 7. 6. He is  
 stiled by David, *The God of my mercy*, Psal. 59. 10. God  
 the Son likewise is called *The consolation of Israel*, Luk.  
 2. 25. And God the Holy Ghost hath his Title to be  
 the Comforter, *abiding with Believers for ever*, Joh. 14. 17.  
 & Joh. 15. 26. the word *παράκλητος*, rendred out of the  
 Originall, *Comforter*, signifieth ( saith the learned Gro-  
 tius ) one who pleadeth the cause of another, who is  
 a guilty person, as it were an Advocate ; so that when  
 a soule is under temptation, or drouping for sinne,  
 the spirit of God the Comforter erecteth, cheareth,  
 exciteth, and reviveth it by alledging, as it were, the  
 Priviledges of the promises, which in the right under-  
 standing, and in the due application of them, ease  
 the burthen of the Conscience loaden with sinne ; the  
 spirit

spirit being therefore stiled *The holy spirit of promise*, Eph. 1. 14. because he cleareth, assureth, and <sup>b</sup> seal-eth up the Title, and Confirmation of them to the soules of the Elect, co-witnessing *with their spirits*, that they are the *sonnes of God*, and so discharged, Rom. 8. 16. 33.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 22.  
Ephes. 4. 30.

And indeed, to hold you no longer in these so prolix amplifications, the very scope and aime of S. *John* in my Text, is to prevent, and to anticipate the feare of discomfort that probably might surprize the children of God about what he had spoken touching the sin which was unto death, for which no prayers were allowed for to implore the pardon of it; for whereas the very Saints themselves found unrighteousnesse (at least in the remainders) within them, sanctification in this life being only <sup>c</sup> Inchoate, not Consummate, and the Apostle expressly granting, that all unrighteousnesse was sin, lest they might (privy to themselves of sinne) suspect, out of a pious jealousy that that sin in them might be this sin unto Death, (chiefly when both in Judgment, and Conscience they knew it to be sin) therefore in the 18. verse he affirms, that *who so is borne of God sinneth not*, not simply, not at all; for in Chap. 1. vers. 8. including himself (though an Apostle) as well as other Saints, he declares expressly, *If we say that we have no sinne*, what then? not, we are proud, and so have no humility in us: *But wee deceive our selves, and lye, and so the truth is not in us*; and to the same purpose S. Cyprian makes his observation upon the conjoyning together of those two Petitions in the Lords Prayer, *Give us this Day our daily Bread, and forgive us our Trespases*, that we might take notice of as much necessity that we had to begge of God the pardon of our daily trespases, as the suppeditation, and supply of our daily Bread: But his meaning is, *He that is begotten, and borne of God, sinneth not unto death*, that great and unpardonable offence, and blasphemy

<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. 13. 12.  
2 Cor. 3. 18.  
Phil. 3. 13.

phemy of the Holy Ghost : They cannot fall, whosoever are elected, and regenerate of the spirit of God, into that sin, which because, as ye have heard already, it is not ( through Gods formidable Judgment thereupon ) capable of repentance, no more is it of remission, or forgivenesse : Now all sins being pardoned to the Elect, it follows, that they are beyond the reach or danger of this sin which is said to be ( irreparably ) unto death, and that not temporall only, but eternall. O royall priviledg ! O mercy incomprehensible ! A regenerate soule sinneth not unto death ? Surely Solomon could not shew the Queen of Sheba so much treasure in all the <sup>d</sup> glory of his Kingdome, as is lapt up in these few words : and O that God would open this Arke of mercy, wherein this Doctrine lyeth, and set it wide before the eyes of poore afflicted Consciences, which like Noah's Dove fly up and down upon the water of their afflictions, and can see nothing but only the gulse, and deluge of their sins, wherein there is no place for them to <sup>e</sup> rest their feet : I say, and pray, as devout Hooker, the God of Pity, and <sup>f</sup> Compassion, give every <sup>g</sup> tempted soul faith, and strength, and courage, every day, and every houre, and every moment, to embrace, and to lay hold upon this truth, <sup>h</sup> sweeter by farre then honey, or the honey-combe, dropping and distilling, yea diffusing comfort, even <sup>i</sup> joy unspeakable and full of glory.

<sup>d</sup> Mat. 6. 29.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. 8. 9.

<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. 1. 3.

Lam. 3. 32.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. 2. 18.

Gal. 6. 1.

<sup>h</sup> Psal. 19. 10.

<sup>i</sup> 1 Pet. 1. 8.

Notes of Regeneration.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Joh. 3. 9.

<sup>l</sup> Eze. 36. 31.

Rom. 7. 15.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Cor. 7.

10, 11.

Whosoever then finds in himselfe any sound note of election, and regeneration, that man may assure himself he hath not committed, no nor <sup>k</sup> can commit this deadly, and unpardonable sin : let me epitomize the larger enumeration of such signes under the short abridgment of these few heads.

1. *Peccati displicentia*, <sup>l</sup> dislike of sin, godly <sup>m</sup> sorrow for sin, striving against sin, though his falls have been fowle even against knowledg, he may be assured he is free from this sin.



2. A second may be *Veritatis Amor*, Cordiall ° love of Evangelicall Truth, if that still be deare unto him, insomuch as he would be content to buy it at any rate, but will sell it at no rate, *Pro. 23. 23.*

3. A third is Faith, not only that which is called *Fides quæ*, the doctrine of faith staying in the History and generall truth of the Gospel, to which as many a Castaway hath attained, so likewise many an Apostate hath departed from it, *1 Tim. 1. 19. 1 Tim. 4. 1.* But that which is *Fides quâ*, the faith of Gods Elect, *Tit. 1. 1.* consisting not onely in a bare naked knowledg, but also in the acknowledging of the Truth, which is after godlinesse, specially applying the promises of grace through Jesus Christ to himselfe in particular, *Gal. 2. 20.* This faith, though \* little in regard of the measure, yet being sound in regard of the Truth, it's alike pretious in all the Saints, *2 Pet. 1. 1.* nor will God quench the smoaking flax, *Isa. 42. 3. Matth. 12. 20.* Though there may for a time appeare more smoak than fire, yet whilst there is fire, there is the spirit of all grace, but chiefly of faith in the truth thereof, which is an infallible fruit of Election, *2 Thes. 2. 13.*

4. The last that I shall now name is the love of the Brethren, because they are Brethren, for the very profession sake of the truth of the Gospel, not for any naturall endowments, or morall habiliments, or for the meer emoluments, or ornaments of Fortune, all which are but *pompatica, & volatica*, as one calls them, the trappings, and dresses, like unto flatulent chaffe, *They take unto themselves wings, and fly away*: But when grace that shineth in them is the motive of our love, that is an evidence indeed of our being translated from a state of spiritual death, to the contrary condition, and state of spiritual life, and salvation, *1 John 3. 14.* If these things be in us, and abound, wee shall never fall from election, or (whilst they are in their vigorous and

° 2 Thes. 2.  
11. Pl. 119.  
20. 97. Job  
23. 13.

\* *Est infirma fides, tamen, illa fides.*

P 2 Iohn 1.

and predominant exercise ) from the assurance of the same, 2 Pet. 1. 10. Now, if we are assured of salvation, and that not only *Certitudine objecti*, as the Schoolmen speak, as it rests in *mente divinâ*, in the mind of God, certain in it selfe; but likewise *Certitudine subiecti*, as it is in the use of the right meanes, manifested to our owne breasts by Gods spirit; we have then an evidence, that we are in state of present grace, and so are borne of GOD, and by consequent sinne not unto death.

Use 2.

<sup>9</sup> Matth. 7. 1.  
Luke 6. 37.

<sup>1</sup> Acts 6. 11.

I hasten now Brethren, for a second Use, but very succinctly, of what hath been thus enlarged upon this sin; It may serve to restrain from all rash, and headlong censure of others, whose facts perhaps may be grievous, yet they for all that, not culpable of this great transgression, it may be they persecute, blaspheme, &c. Howbeit, inasmuch as we know not whether it issue out of malice, at least, though evidence be apparant of malice against our persons; yet if not, for Grace-sake, feare to censure of this sin unto Death: It's not ingenuous to be like *Porcupines* darting quills of <sup>9</sup> censure on mens spiritual states, or but doubtfull actions: the carriage of our Saviour towards the carping *Pharisees*, ( who were still angling after some advantage against him, *seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*, Luk. 11. 54. ) I say, his carriage towards them in the businesse of the woman accused for being taken in the act of Adultery, *John* 8. 8. is very remarkable; whilst they continued asking of him what punishment she deserved, they intending to have surrounded him with a *Dilemma*, that if he had said she was to be stoned, he had been a meddler in State matters, things criminall, and capitall; if not, then he had spoken against <sup>1</sup> *Moses*, and the Law, and by that have brought himsele in danger; but our Saviour, to divert the importunity of so many intangling questions, v. 6, & 8. *He stooped downe, and with his*

his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not, many are the conjectures at what that should be which he then wrote: Saint Ambrose his conceit was, that He wrote that sentence, *Matt: 7. 3. Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy Brothers eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.* Bedaguered, that he wrote the sentence which He spake, he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at He: *Hymo* seems more witty, than judicious in his apprehension hereabout, He thinks he wrote certain Characters in the pavement, which the accusers beholding, might see as in a glass their own wickednes, and so blushing at it, slunk away, in the conviction of their own Conscience: But whatever it was sure we are (said once an eminent Divine of our Church) our Saviour would have false accusations written in dust, to be trodden under foot of those that passe by, take we heed how we judge rash judgment of another mans state, or conscience, presume not to sit in Gods Consistory, every man stands, or falls, in point of his soules judgment to the Supreme Lawgiver, Judge therefore nothing, before the time, that God, who alone judgeth w<sup>th</sup> righteous Judgment, doth discover all secrets, and actions, whether they be good, or whether they be evill: In the mean time, let us observe in the Text, that there is a sin not unto death, as well as that which is said to be unto death, for which there is a warrant for us to pray, and upon our prayers (duly qualified) a promise to be heard for the life of our Brother repenting, there remains yet something farther observable, out of the body of the Text, which I shall only intimate, and so conclude this discourse for the present.

Whereas the Apostle saith, there is a sin, one unto death, and another not so, we may note a difference, and distinction of sins, one is more haynous than another, there are some stains: *Gen: 4.* and in *Isa: 1. 18.* sins of a scarlet dye, some sins against the Body: *1 Cor. 6. 18.*

H

others

s Rom. 14. 10.

r Jam: 4. 12.

v i C r. 4. 5.

w Joh. 7. 24

i Sam: 16.

7.

*Spiritualia peccata graviora sunt, quam Carnalia: quia Spirituale peccatum plus habet de aversione, à Deo, & Carnalia peccata habent vehementius impulsivum, viz. ipsam connatam cupiditatem.*  
Th  
q



2 Matt. 23. 24.

Among the latine is a critical distinction between peccatum, crimen, scelus, facinus, fugitium, delictum, vitium, vid. Albert. reuicamp: p. 365. De Iustific:

Facere non facienda peccatum est, facienda non facere delictum est, Hugo de S. victore, Allegor: in Exod: 13. c: 6. & vitia flagitii leuiora sunt.

Aul: Gell: l. 1. c: 17. Noct: Attist: Delictum est contra precept: affirmat: Commission, contra negatiuum. Nic: de orbellis, in 2 Sent: Dist: 43. & Lombard: l. 2. Dist: 42.1.

\* Pet: 3. 9.

others against the soul, Prov: 3. 36. some y moats, and some beames, some y gnats, and some Camels, some spots, Jud. v: 12. and some monstrous clouts, Isa: 64. 6. There are sins of incogitancy, or of sudden surreption, as vain fighs that affect to some ill, or idle, and independent thoughts, which have no consistancy together, from such secret, undetected sins David prayed to be cleansed: Psal: 19. 12. There are also sins of set purpose, when the heart of the Sons of men is [fully set] in them to do evil: Eccles: 8. 11. There are sins of ignorance, for which attonement might be made, and there are other committed with an high hand more presumptuously, and severely to be punished Numb: 15. 30. Psal: 19. 12 13: There are sins of infirmity. Psal. 77. 10. and there are some raigning: Rom: 6. 12. Eph. 2. 2, 3. some customary. Jer. 13. 23. and there is a sin, or blasphemy of malice, which is unpardonable: In summe, sins may be said to arise in haynousnes 3. manner of wayes. 1. *Genere*, in the kind of the sin. 2. *Gradu*, in the degree of it. 3. *Circumstantiis*, in the circumstances. In the kind so saith Solomon, though theft be a sin, yet adultery is more haynous, as appears by the penalty of both: Prov. 6. 30. 32. in the kind of it, its greater: so vain swearing abominable, but false swearing is, in the kind more damnable, in the degree Mat: 5. 22. Rash anger a degree of murder, reproachfull railing higher, but actual embroiling hands in blood, still much more enormous: wanton looks dispose to adultery, unchast gestures more, but the act of uncleanes fowlest of all: In the circumstances, some vary the kind of the sin, as thus, theft of common things from men a sin, but robbing God, Mal: 3. 9 is a sacriledg, and reducible under the breaches of the first precept, \* railing at men a sin, 1 Cor: 6. 10. but railing at God, blasphemy. Matt: 12. 31. 32. There are also circumstances, that though they vary not the kind of the sin, yet add much to the aggravation of it; three only we may insist on. 1. The motive. 2. The manner.

manner. 3. The issue. To persecute of ignorance, as Paul did: 1 Tim: 1.13. is much, but of malice more, the motive makes it so; to sin of passion, inordinate, discomfortable, Psal. 116.11. but to sin wilfully more dangerous: Heb: 10.26. For the manner, to sin in secret, Eph: 5. 12. fearfull, but to declare sins *a* openly as Sodom, Isa. 3. 9. far more haynous; once to fail in duty to com it drunkenes, its sinfull, but daily to add drunkenes to thrift, Deut: 29. 19. and to say, as those swinish Atheists in the Prophet; Isa: 56. 12. Prov: 23. 35. To morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant, this still heightens the odious abomination: For the issues, thus conceive, *b* scandalous sins are greater, and those by whom many *c* exemplary are defiled, Heb: 12. 15. than others that stick in the person singly, and by himself: I might be very copious under these severall heads: But I consider the great affairs now following.

And indeed, this is the constant Doctrine of our Churches, however the *d* Romane Catholicks charge us with a kind of stoicism in this point, as if we made all sins equall: The *e* stoicks, to whose Fate Tully in his Paradoxes seems to incline, had as the Jovinians since them a fond opinion, that all sins were equall, none more grievous than others, yea as greatly sin He, *Qui gallum gallinacium*, as *Qui Patrem interfecit*, who killed a Cock, as He who slew his Father; A sentence devised by them, to keep men in more awe and to make them have care to ihuneven the least sins, such al were of equal haynousnes among them; but indeed, it is the high way to prophanes; and the Scripture is expresse against this parity, (as Saint Hierome expresth it) and for the *\* inequality of sins*, Job: 19. 11. our Saviour saith

*e* Hoc de paritate peccatorum soli Stoici ausi sunt disputare contra omnem sensum generis humani. Hieron. *f* Among the Greeks *ἀμαρτία*, & *ἀμαρτία*, differ; the one denoting every ordinary offence; and aberration from the right mark: the other, that sin which is more enormous and deeply fastened in a man, Sumitur pr gravi, & incondonabili crimine, Grotius: so likewise *ἀμαρτία*, & *ἀμαρτία*, peccans, & peccator, or as Stephan: peccatosus, qui peccati habitum comparaverit. Beza.

*a* Vid. Thom. 1a, 2a, qu: 73. Art. 3.

*b* Matt. 18. 6, 7. Rom. 14. 21. *c* Omne animi vitium tanto conspectius in se crimina habet, quanto major, qui peccat, habetur. Juven: Rationes a. vid: apud Thom: 1a, 2a, qu: 73. Art. 10.

*d* Hoc quoque tritum est in hæc fœce Protestantium peccata esse paria; hæc. trutinâ non levius in Deum deliquerit ille caupo qui gallum gallinaceum, quam qui hominem occiderit. Campianus Jesuit. Rat. 8.

of *Judas*, who delivered him into the hands, and power of *Pilat*, that he had in the comparative, the [greater] sin; there are bad: and there are worse; 1 *Tim*: 5. 8. He that provideth not for his own, is [worse] than an Infidell, 2 *Pet*: 2. 20: and *Matt*: 12. 45: the latter end is worse than their beginning: *Ezek* 16. 47. *Jerusalem* was corrupted [more] than *Samaria* in all her ways; and this appears also by the diversity that is in the degrees of punishment, our Saviour himself speaks of a more easie, and a more tolerable state at the day of Judgment. *Matt*: 11. 22. 24. there is a greater, and there is a lesse damnation. *Matt*: 23. 14. there are many, and few stripes, *Luk*. 12. 47. 48. and though all sins deserve eternal death, yet are not all sinners equally tormented. Now God being a righteous Judge, proportions the measure of punishments according to the measure, and degree of sinning; some sins there are which the Lord out of his longanimity, and patience, after a sort, passeth by as not seeing them, *Act*: 17. 30. *aspiciat*, winking at them: But there are others so atrocious, as that they cry aloud to Heaven for vengeance, of which nature was the blood of *Abel*, *Gen*: 4. 10. the grievous sin of *Sodom*, *Gen* 18. 20. so likewise oppression, *Exod*: 3. 7. and 22, 23. and the defrauding labourers of their hire. *Jam* 5. 4: there is a fulnes of iniquity, such as the *Amorites* arose unto *Gen*. 15. 16. and a measure to be filled up, *Matt*: 23. 32. such was that state of the obstinate Jews, on whom a proportionable fulnes of wrath came to the uttermost. 1 *Thes*. 2. 16.

\* But, however upon these testimonies, it be clear, that this *Stoicism* be easily charged upon our Churches; yet is the opinion (it seems) much amongst our People, to whom all sins are equal; we are all sinners (say they) true; but I trow not all Adulterers not all remorseles, and impenitent sinners: and they shall know, one day, that there is a difference of sins, when God shall in judgment inflict heavier damnation.

f *Gen*: 18. 25.  
2 *Tim*: 4. 8.  
g *Rev*. 18. 7.

h *Mic*. 7. 13.

*Clamitat ad  
caelum vox san-  
guinis, & Sodo-  
morum, vox op-  
pressorum, mer-  
ce delecta la-  
borum.*



To shew up all, if we reach not an inequality of sins, *Quest.*  
how then is it (say *Papists*) that we say all are mortal,  
and none venial?

To this the answer lyeth thus, though the distinction  
of mortal, and venial, be not in terms, so expressed, yet  
in sense, it is contained under these words of the Apo-  
stle, *A sin unto death, and a sin not unto death*: the odds is  
only in the manner of explication: venial sins to them  
are all such which are so in their own nature, as light  
matters out of incogitancy, and of surreption, or of  
humane infirmity, as impertinent thoughts, idle words,  
wanton glances, &c. such as these are pardonable in  
themselves, at most, are made expiable by some i tem-  
porary sufferings, even without repentance properly  
taken either here, or in purgatory, mortall, in their  
sense, are such only as are of the grossest kind, and  
which do *vastare conscientiam*, wound and wast the con-  
science, as Murther, Treason, Sacrilege, &c.

Now, *B. e. hren*, the Orthodox right meaning of the  
distinction is, in sum this: sins are said to be mortall,  
or venial, either in their own naturall merit, and de-  
sert, or else in the event, and issue: If we look to the na-  
turall merit of every sin, yea though it be but a  
thought of foolishnes, it is mortall, deserving the curse,  
*Gal: 3. 10.* and eternal death, *Rom: 6. 23.* Yet in the  
event, and issue, some sins are venial, that is, capable  
of pardon, yea, all and every sin incident into the elect,  
and into the adopted Sons, and Daughters of God;  
murther, and adultery, sins mortall by desert, yet veni-  
all, and actually *m* pardoned to *David* in the event, be-  
cause his Person was accepted into favour with God;  
Blasphemy, and persecution, sins mortall in their de-  
sert, yet both these, in the event *n* pardoned unto Saint  
*Paul*, being a chosen vessel of salvation unto God; so  
was *Peters* perjury, and the deniall of his Master; yea,  
universally all sins, all *p* manner of sins, of what kind  
soever, are pardonable to Gods elect by Christ, yea  
actually

*Ans.*

*i Remissio ve-  
nialis peccati  
nihil aliud est,  
quam solutio  
pœnæ temporalis  
pro eo debita.*

*Scotus l. 4.*

*Dist. 21.*

*k Ad remissio-  
nem peccati ve-  
nialis non re-  
quiritur peni-  
tentia propriè  
accepta remit-  
titur a. veniale  
per satisfactio-  
nem in purgato-  
rio. Biel, 4.*

*sent. dist. 15.*

*qu. 5. Art. 2.*

*l Pro. 24 9.*

*m 2 Sam. 12.*

*13.*

*n 1 Tim. 1. 13.*

*o Act. 9. 15.*

*p Mat. 12. 31.*

r Matt: 18. 22  
s By Andr: Ser  
on Joh. 20. 23.

actually al pardoned to them who are really, & indeed incorporate into Christ J: sus, *Rom: 8. 2.* And surely, (Beloved) Christ teaching us that we our selves should forgive untill *r* seventy times seven times, after a sort, gives us notice, (as a great *s* Divine observes) that He will not stick with us for the like number of ours; for God forbid we should imagine, 'that he taught us to be more mercifull, than he will be himself: that number saith He, amounteth to ten Jubilees of pardon, for so many sins we may hope for pardon at his hands: If those be not enough, we have example of one whose sins were more in number, than the hairs of his head: *Psal. 40. 12.* to whom yet all were remitted.

v 1 Joh. 1.  
7 Rev: 1: 5.  
and Rev: 7. 14.  
Zech: 13. 1.

w 1 Pet: 1.  
2 Heb. 12. 24  
x Mat: 7. 3.

And whereas it is affirmed, (and that most truly) *1 Cor. 1. 25.* by the Apostle, *that the weaknes of God is stronger then men;* if there were any sin greater, than could be remitted, then the weaknes of man (for of that cometh sin) should be stronger than God, which neither reason, nor religion will admit. And indeed, what is it in the sins of the elect, and regenerate, that should make them apprehend other, than a pardonableness in it? In sin are considerable, either the *ἀνομία*, or transgression of the Law, *1 Joh. 3. 4.* but all that transgression is forgiven, *Psal: 32. 1.* or the pollution, *2 Cor: 7. 1.* and that is covered, and *v* cleansed, or the guilt thereof, through the offence of God, and behold, neither is that at all imputed to them, *ver. 2. 16.* as the blood of the paschall Lamb wherewith the two side-posts, and the upper dore post of the House, wherein it was to be eaten, *Exod: 12: 7.* (in tipe of Christ the true Pascover, as he is stiled: *1 Cor: 5. 7.*) was stricken, saved the owners from the stroak of the destroying Angel; so doth the blood of sprinkling *w* of J: sus Christ, cleanse the Conscience from dead works, *Heb: 9. 14.*

To conclude, if our sins be as *x* moats in our eyes, and cause them to water. Loe, God hath his handkercheif, wherewith He wipes all tears from our eyes,

*Rev:*

Rev: 7.7: are they y menstruous? he hath his hyſop, wherewith to waſh, and to make us clean, Pſal: 51. 7. If they be of z a ſcarlet dye, yet H: hath his a fullers ſope to whiten the Conſcience as white as ſnow, when our Saviour in the Garden ſweat but b [like] unto blood, it was a great agony, it made ſuch a ſweat, as was meritorious; yet this was but a preparative to his poti on on the Croſſe, for there He ſweat not [like] unto blood, but c blood and water, water to waſh away the ſins of our daily infirmities, and blood to purge our ſins in grain, and a deeper colour then blood our ſins cannot bear: ſhall we ſin (ſaith the Holy Ghost) that Grace may abound? God forbid: Rom. 6. 1. yet if ſin do chance to abound, free grace hath the ſuperlative of ſin, and doth ſuperabound: *abundat delictum, ſuperabundat gracia*, Sin doth abound, but grace hath abounded above, it doth ſuperabound; Rom. 5. 20. *Abyſſus abyſſum invocat*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *one deep calleth for another*, the depth of our ſins, for the depth of Gods compaſſions which never fail. And now, O that the Spirit of the Lord would give this Doctrin entrance into the hearts of all his People, and that the d eyes of their underſtanding were as bright as the Sun, that they might throughly ſee, and know the riches of the glorious inheritance of the Saints in light; who though they ſometimes fall, yet ſhall they not, can they not fall utterly away from God though the wicked one may tempt them, yet ſhall he not touch them, *tactu qualitativo*, as Caietan expounds it, with a touch of ſmall hurt, ſo dangerously to annoy them, as wholly to alter their renewed hearts unto a ſtate of total depravation, or corrupt impenitency, they ſhall not, they e cannot (under ſuch a ſtate of Regeneration) ſin unto death: Behold Chriſt, whoſe ſuit God never denied: Joh: 11: 42. He hath prayed his Father to keep them through his own name: Joh: 17. 11. and his Father is greater then all, and none is able to pluck them out of his Fathers hand, no nor out of his own hand,

y Iſa: 64. 6.

z Iſa: 1. 18.

a Mal: 3. 2.

b Luk: 22. 44

c Joh. 19. 34.

d Eph. 1. 18.

Act: 26. 18.

e 1 Joh. 3. 9.



f Joel 2. 14.

g Cant 4. 11.

h Phil. 4. 1.

i 1 Pet. 1. 5.

k Psal. 75. 24.

hand, *Job*: 28, 29. He hath kept them all in his Fathers name, and hath not lost one of all whom his Father had given to him, *Job*: 17. 12. and (which is more still) what Christ by his merit wrought [for] them, the same by his Spirit he virtually worketh [in] them, and enables them through his strength, *Phil*: 4. 13. in some measure, to keep themselves under the right use of the lawfull means, 1 *Joh*. 5. 18. for to our own safety, our own sedulity is required; yea, (that I may close up all with comfort, and leave some blessing from Heaven to Gods Saints behind me, that my lips like the Spouse of Christ may drop as the g Hony comb, wherein there is both *mel.* & *cera*, Hony to sweeten, and withall wax to enlighten) all you, (my Dearly Beloved Countrymen, and h longed for in the Lord) you who are born of God, you shall be all kept by Gods i own power through faith, and salvation, be all k guided by his Counsel, and at last be brought home to his Glory. Even so be it,  
*Amen, Amen.*

Αδχα τῷ θεῷ μὲν ἐν πνεύματι  
 εἰς τὴν αἰῶνα.

*Amen.*

*A word*

*A word to the present Occasion,  
and so an end.*

**I**T may now be expected, happily on some hands, that I should take upon me to exhort these learned, reverend, and religious \* Judges, but truly I dare not make so bold; I can say it upon my owne knowledg of them, that they are such as who do desire to <sup>a</sup> serve God in their generation <sup>b</sup> faithfully, (within their station) and to doe all \* impartiall Justice even for \* Justice sake; What the Scriptures (out of which I must have ordered my speech unto them) direct for the Work, and Duty of such Eminent Magistrates, their Practise is an exact Comment upon it: Wherefore, let us all (I am sure the men of my profession have great reason so to do) blesse God (by whose providence, and <sup>c</sup> power they sit in Judgment) for them, and enlarge our \* devotion for the support and continuation of them: They will observe what is said in my Text; that as there is a sinne unto Death, so also a sin not unto Death, and will themselves (as <sup>d</sup> Gods with Men) temper Mercy with Justice, *Hab. 3. 2.*

As to M.\* High Sheriff, he, as he is descended of a Family of a good extraction, so he is an honorer of Magistracy, as is conspicuous to all who view this goodly *Passe Comitatus* now in his Retinew, many of quality; lovers (as himselfe, who cannot but be a Leader thererein) of the right Religion, of the purity of Gods Ordinances, and of their Countrey: He will not but enoble himselfe by doing acts worthy of his station, in advancing the glory of God, in his Person, in his Family, and before all; that so striving as *Boaz,*

\* The R. Honorable *John Wilde*, Lord chief Baron of the Court of Excheq; & the R. H. *Edward Aikins* one of the Justices of the Court of Common Pleas.

<sup>a</sup> Acts 13. 36.

<sup>b</sup> 3 John 5. :

\* *Deut. 1. 17.*

\* *2 Sam. 23. 3.*

<sup>c</sup> *Rom. 13. 1.*

\* *1 Tim. 2. 2.*

<sup>d</sup> *Exo. 12. 28.*

*Psal. 82. 6.*

*Joh. 10. 34;*

35.

\* *M. George Luttrell* of *Dunster Castle* Esq;

<sup>e</sup> Ruth 4. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Acts 6. 3.

<sup>g</sup> Exo. 8. 21.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Tim. 3. 6.

<sup>i</sup> Rev. 9. 11.

<sup>\*</sup> 2 Pet. 2. 1.

*accusator est, hoc est, fur, clam, & subdole subintroductum speciem pietatis, & nomen ecclesiae praetendens fraudulenter & Gerh & Aurelius ad locum.*

<sup>k</sup> 2 Cor. 11.

14.

<sup>l</sup> 2 Tim. 3. 13.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Chr. 19. 6.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Tim. 1. 10.

<sup>o</sup> Exo. 20. 2.

<sup>\*</sup> Psal. 9. 4.

<sup>p</sup> Gal. 6. 7.

<sup>r</sup> John 2. 24,

25. & John

21. 17. Jer.

23, 24.

Psal. 7. 9.

<sup>r</sup> Ps. 139. 1, 2.

Psal. 11. 4.

<sup>t</sup> Psal. 89. 36,

37.

<sup>u</sup> 1 Cor. 16.

13.

<sup>w</sup> Heb. 13. 18.

<sup>x</sup> Psal. 37. 27.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 11.

<sup>z</sup> John 1. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Revel. 2. 5.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 5. 15,

16.

<sup>b</sup> John 5. 35.

<sup>c</sup> Mat. 21. 43.

to doe <sup>e</sup> worthily in Ephrata, he shall be famous in his Berlechem.

As to the grand Jury, upon your fidelity and trust, almost the whole transaction of this solemn, publique meeting resteth: Gentlemen, men of good <sup>f</sup> report, and repute, men of <sup>g</sup> truth, and fearing God will doe like themselves, be tender of Gods honour, by a strict enquiry after the Blasphemers of Gods name, his precious Ordinances, Gospel, and worship, or whatsoever is contrary to the life, and power of godlinesse, or to the peace, and prosperity of this Commonwealth: But if indeed I might set a speciall Accent upon my intimations to them, it shall be with the most sharpest perspicacity to make a disquisition, and discovery of those grand Incendiaries of the Chrstian world, the brood of Jesuites, who like Serpents <sup>h</sup> creep into every angle, and under variety of shapes, into most Assemblies in the Land, having *Jesus* in their <sup>i</sup> Name, and lips, but *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon* in their hearts: In my conscience, I am perswaded, they have been instrumentally (though in a <sup>\*</sup> clandestine, and imperceptible way) the rayfers and fomenters of the greatest part of all the rufull divisions, and distractions that have been among us: I have heard some persons of quality say, That most of the English Seminaries abroad are become empty, that perhaps, there may be the more Emissaries to deceive at home, God of his goodnesse unmasque them, those secret <sup>k</sup> Satans transformed like to Angels of light, and deliver <sup>l</sup> seduced soules.

As to the petty Jurers, Witnesses, and others employed in the present publique affayres, be advised, and <sup>m</sup> Take heed what yee doe; <sup>n</sup> Perjury the God of Truth will not hold <sup>o</sup> guiltless; remember, it's a degree, and a great step towards this sin unto Death, to offend against knowledge, chiefly if it be of malicious wickednesse (as ye heard but now) distinguish between the Person,



Person and the \* Cause, know, God will not be p mock  
ed, He is omniscient, views your most secret purposes,  
aimes, and intentions; He is πολυμματος ὁὖς, as Aga-  
petus once said to Justinian, an understanding full of  
many eyes; labour then to be affected with the consi-  
deration thereof, and be as the Sun and Moon in the  
Heavens, t faithfull witnesses, u quit your selves like  
w honest men, and conscientious Christians.

To all the people of God in generall I say, x Eschew  
euill, doe good, which two make up a true Nathanael,  
and an Israelite y indeed; as yet, the z Candlestick of  
the Church is among us, and a lights shining in the  
same, O b rejoyce in those lights whilst they are a-  
mong you; Commit not by your c unfruitfulnesse, or  
unthankfulnesse, that the Kingdome of heaven be taken  
from you: d Cherish grace by those sanctified meanes  
by which the Lord at first conveyed it into your  
hearts, owne, and e honour those f allowed pub-  
lique instruments, who as the Lords g Ambassadors  
brought the h treasure of the i glorious Gospel unto  
you, though but in earthen Vessels, least God in judg-  
ment send you a k Famine, if not of Bread and of wa-  
ter, yet of hearing the word of the Lord, even that  
word of l truth, which is able to m save your soules:  
Take heed of sinning against n light, or against your  
owne o experience of Gods goodnesse p diffused in the  
Ordinances; shun \* spirituall pride, the inordinate o-  
verweening, and admiration of self-excellencies, the  
Mother, and Nurse of most, or of all soule-distempers,  
it's a sin now raigning above many, it makes the soule  
most unlike to God, and most of all r like unto the  
Devill; yea, rather be ye s cloathed with humility,  
and let that be t your Ornament, which is both the  
receptacle, and conserver of all true grace, and that  
wherein the Spirit, and u God of all grace taketh up a  
cheerfull and a chearing w Rest, keeping the soule  
and consciences from the sin unto death.

d Isa. 30. 21.  
I Thef. 5. 10.  
e Phil. 2. 29.  
I Thef. 5. 12,  
13.  
f I Tim. 1. 12.  
g 2 Cor. 5. 20.  
h 2 Cor. 4. 7.  
i I Tim. 1. 11.  
k Amos 8. 11.  
l Jam. 1. 18.  
m Jam. 1. 21.  
n Rom. 1. 32.  
o Rom. 5. 4.  
Phil. 1. 9.  
αἰσχος.  
p Rom. 5. 5.  
ἐκκέχεται.  
\* David, Psal.  
19. prayed to  
be delivered  
from presump-  
tion **נָדָה**  
from pides,  
**הָרָה** zadah  
arrogano fuit.  
r I Tim. 3. 6.  
s I Pet. 5. 5.  
t ἐγκομβώσα-  
ς of κόμβος  
a knot (the  
word here  
only used) tie  
humility to  
you, as curious  
women do  
knots on their  
garments for  
ornament.  
u Pet. 5. 10.  
w Isa. 57. 15.  
τὸ ὅτι κατοικη-  
τήριον, καὶ [ἡ  
ἀνάπαυσις]  
τὸ πνεύματος  
ἡ, ταπεινοφρο

And

sum. Mac.  
Homil. 19.  
\* 1 Thef. 5. 23.

*And so the very God of peace x sanctifie you wholly : and I pray God your whole spirit, and soule, and body be preserved blamelesse unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ : Unto whom with thee, O Father, and thine Eternall Spirit, be all prayse, honour, and immortall glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

*Christian Reader, If any faults have escaped the Presse (the Author being absent when this pious learned Sermon was printing) thou art desired to correct them with thy pen.*

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